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PARIS IN PERIL.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO., EDINBURGH
CHANDOS STREET, LONDON



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Frontispiece, vol. II. WILD MEAT FOR SALE AT A BUTCHER'S SHOP IN THE BOULEVARD HAUSSMANN.

PARIS IN PERIL.

EDITED BY

HENRY VIZETELLY,

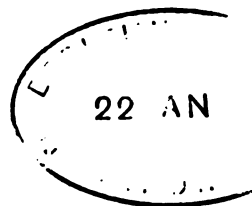
AUTHOR OF

"THE STORY OF THE DIAMOND NECKLACE," "BERLIN UNDER THE NEW EMPIRE,"
"A HISTORY OF CHAMPAGNE," ETC.

With Sixteen Illustrations.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

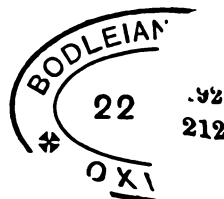


LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1882.

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PARIS IN PERIL.

VII.

"FROM GRAVE TO GAY."

I. PARIS, A PLACE OF WAR.

PARIS, invested by an immense army, isolated from the rest of the world, with an outer and an inner belt of fortifications, and inside the latter a complete network of barricades ; with 450,000 men under arms burning with patriotic enthusiasm, camping in all its open spaces, exercising on its boulevards, lining its ramparts, guarding its gates, parading its streets, crowding its cafés and restaurants—Paris, with the wreck of an Empire scarcely cleared away, and a Provisional Government incessantly assailed by a crowd of vain, crotchety, or envious Democrats, watching their opportunity to seize the reins of power, was, of course, no longer the gay and frivolous city of a few months previous. Luxury and display had ceased to flaunt there. Brilliant equipages, prancing horses, and liveried lacqueys had disappeared with their masters ; gone alike were the meilleur and demi-mondes, the grandes dames and the decorated marshals, the obsequious senators and the cringing deputies, the vieillards blasés and the jeunesse dorée, the male and female mouchards, the petits crevés, and the cocottes.

Advocates and journalists, who governed us, with National and Mobile Guards, were well-nigh the only classes apparent in the city.

Walking along the streets one met with ten képis to one chapeau, with ten muskets to one walking-stick ; for chauvinisme and képisme had apparently seized hold of the entire population, which having for many years played the soldier and shirked the reality, now found the latter staring them in the face. Unfitted as the Parisian might hitherto have seemed for military life, at this juncture he strove his utmost to master its many difficulties, to put up with its many privations ; and under terrible pressure he proceeded to learn both how to kill and how to be killed by military art and rule.

Not merely upon the ramparts were there visible and outward signs that Paris was a beleaguered city, though of course the enceinte displayed innumerable works of defence. Each gate had its drawbridge, the approach to which was mined, either in the ordinary fashion, with gunpowder, or else with torpedoes. Petroleum pumps, projecting a murderous flame for a distance of fifty yards, were also in readiness should the foe advance too near, and the electric light had been called into requisition to signal his approach. Casemates and shell-proof look-out ports, rows of barrels filled with sand or water, lines of fascines, bags of earth arranged on the parapets for the protection of sentries, palisades bristling around the moats, barricades forming a formidable inner line of defence—all these and many other protective works were here, guaranteeing the city from any sudden surprise. Guarding the ramparts were National Guards and Mobiles, forest keepers and coastguardsmen, ex-

sergeants de ville and Franc-tireurs, military and naval artillerymen and volunteers, all vying with each other in the execution of their duties. Bustling with animation throughout the daytime, at night the enceinte became hushed. No more laughing groups tippling at canteens; no more passing battalions singing patriotic refrains; no longer any sound from trumpet or from drum. The silence was broken only by the monotonous cry, "Sentinelle prenez garde à vous," echoing mournfully along the walls; by the sudden "Qui vive?" which challenged some patrol, approaching with measured tread; by the voice of the cannon roaring through the darkness; or else, of the wind whistling around the barricades, gliding down the alleys of tents, groaning under the roofs of the casemates, and crying around the drawbridges—making the flags flutter like phantoms, shaking the gratings, rushing through the battlements and hurrying with pitiful lamentations into the throats of the guns.

Away from these ramparts, fortified with everything that French military engineering could devise, and manned by many thousands of the defenders of the city, there were still plentiful signs that Paris was a Place of War. Indeed, scarcely a street or corner could be found where something did not indicate the stirring situation in which the Parisians found themselves. The new Opera House, then uncompleted, had become a great military and provision depot; whilst from the semaphore, installed upon its summit, between the gilded groups of Apollo and the muses, military signals—perplexing to passers by—were being all day long exchanged with the Arc de Triomphe, the Ministry of Marine, the Pantheon, Montmartre, and Mont Valérien. The vast railway

workshops were turned into cannon foundries, the tobacco factories had become arsenals and cartridge shops, and at the Gaîté Theatre uniforms in thousands were being manufactured. Supplementing the three large military hospitals, the Val de Grâce, the Gros Caillou, and the Récollets, ambulances were everywhere—at all the principal hotels void of guests, and whence many of the landlords had fled, at the huge Magasins de Nouveautés, lacking customers, and at the theatres of the Comédie Française, the Odéon, the Variétés, the Lyrique, the Porte St. Martin, Cluny, and Belleville. Such, indeed, was the plethora of ambulances that patients were actually touted for, and unemployed ambulance vans were in such profusion that the Magasins du Louvre, and similar establishments, sent home purchases in vehicles distinguished by the Red Cross, and flying the flag adopted by the Convention of Geneva. The same flag waved over the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, the Elysée, the Palais Royal, the Palais de Justice, and the Palais de l'Industrie, whilst in the salons of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where the Duc de Gramont dictated the despatches which brought about the War, another ambulance was installed by order of M. Jules Favre; the Corps Législatif—the scene of the mendacious utterances of Messrs. Ollivier, Lebœuf, and Palikao—being devoted to a similar purpose. Then there were yet other ambulances at the Mairies, the Lycées, and the popular schools; ambulances, too, at the railway stations, and even nigh to the wild-beast cages at the Jardin des Plantes; ambulances—these most extensive—of the French Press; together with Catholic, Protestant and Jewish ambulances, and various Foreign ones—Italian, Swiss, Austrian, and American

—not to mention innumerable private establishments; for anybody, allotting a few beds in his house to the wounded, might hang out the Red Cross flag. At these varied places of succour, frères and sœurs of the charitable communities, with priests and ladies, tendered gratuitous attendance upon the wounded; but ere long the papers complained that a number of young men—emasculated petits crevés, and such like—hooked themselves on to the ambulances merely to avoid military duty; and eventually the “women of Paris,” having interviewed Citizen Rochefort on the subject, the police received orders to arrest any one wearing the Red Cross who was unable to produce an official certificate as infirmier or surgeon.

Not merely with ambulances was Paris replete at this epoch, but also with military camps. The Tuileries garden, for instance, had become an artillery bivouac. All who have visited Paris are acquainted with its usual aspect—to-day much the same as in Imperial times. Familiar, indeed, are its fountains and blooming flower beds, marble statues, and terraced walks; its long avenues of lofty lime trees, amongst which the band plays of a summer’s afternoon, whilst old rentiers quietly dose over the papers, and matronly élégantes exercise their fingers with embroidery, and their tongues with chit-chat. Here youth exchanges many a loving vow, and childhood—French childhood, brightly dressed and daintily demure—plays at hoop and ball; the coquettish bonnes, unmindful of their charges, flirting meanwhile with Messieurs les Militaires. But war transformed the customary scene whilst Paris was besieged. Saddles and bridles hung to all the marble statues, horses were picketed under the tall limes, field pieces and ammunition

waggon were ranged in all the open spaces, and the men loitered round the camp fires, pending the trumpet sound which was to summon them into action. Crossing the Place de la Concorde, and entering the Champs Elysées, one found the cafés chantants all closed, the garden of the Concert Musard given up to Gardes Mobiles, cartridges being made in the whilom Cirque de l'Impératrice, cavalry camping both round the Panorama and in the Cours la Reine ; nigh to which, moreover, there were still, at this epoch, cattle sheds and sheep pens, destined soon—too soon—to become tenantless. Passing by the Arc de Triomphe, capped by an important semaphore, one found the Avenue de la Grande Armée covered with whitey-brown tents, wherein Vinoy's soldiers camped on their arrival in Paris after the disaster of Sedan. Tents had also sprung up all over the ci-devant Avenue de l'Impératrice and on the pleasure grounds on either side of this famous drive. Gone were the elegantly dressed pedestrians and the stylish equipages—the huits ressorts and the daumonts, and all the demi mondain "boudoirs on four wheels." The tour du lac was a thing of the past, and the Bois de Boulogne, bereft already of many of its trees, was given over to soldiers and foresters, who dragged the lakes of their remaining fish, and shot such deer and fowl—both tame and wild—as still found shelter within the precincts of the wood.

On the outer boulevards there were long lines of wooden huts, in which Mobiles from the departments were quartered, and also vast enclosures, containing large droves of cattle and flocks of sheep. Frowning batteries occupied the pleasure gardens on the top of Montmartre, where the dwellers by the barrières previously went to dance. Artillery, with horses and

waggons, bivouacked in the Jardin des Plantes, beside the ambulances and the caged wild beasts. On the esplanade of the Invalides other soldiers were encamped in painted baraques, which had lined the boulevards on the previous Jour de l'An ; whilst the Champ de Mars was surrounded with military huts, and its whole surface covered with tents, vehicles, artillery and military stores. The mile of arches of the Auteuil railway viaduct sheltered Breton Gardes Mobiles, and here—where the river bank was defended by formidable earthworks and palisades, whilst piles had been driven in front of the arches of the bridge to bar the passage of the stream—the armed flotilla of five gun boats and three floating batteries, charged with defending the Seine, might be seen lying at anchor.*

Of course, marching and drilling were going on all over the city. At times the whole line of the Champs Elysées was occupied by awkward squads undergoing primary instruction in the handling of the Chassepôt and the tabatière, learning the "goose step," marching and countermarching, manœuvring between the chairs and benches, skirmishing among the trees and toy-stalls, now charging, now retreating from advancing vehicles, then facing about and pretending to fire in platoons, to the alarm of early nursemaids, who scampered off with their charges from sharpshooters deploying at the double quick. One had, in fact, only to step into the nearest open space, in which there was

* The principal vessel of this flotilla, which subsequently assisted at the attacks upon the Prussian works at Meudon and St. Cloud, was the *Farcy*, which took its name from its inventor, by whom it was commanded ; it carried a cannon of ten inches bore, which threw a projectile weighing upwards of 3 cwt. a distance between five and six miles.

room for drill, to find it full of energy and life. Round about the Madeleine squads of patient provincial Gardes Mobiles, or of less amenable Parisian National Guards, might constantly be found learning the alphabet of their new profession. Even that ordinarily lazy lounge, the Palais Royal Garden, assumed a warlike aspect; and, as in the earlier days the National Guards came to their drill in all varieties of civilian undress, the effect produced upon the spectator by this preliminary exercise was singular in the extreme.

There came yet another phase in the aspect of Paris as a Place of War. A platform and a canopy were set up in front of the Pantheon, or Church of St. Geneviève, where Mirabeau, Voltaire, and Rousseau were buried—a temple dedicated to the glory of great Frenchmen. From this pavilion there hung forth a black banner of mourning for the capture of Strasburg and Châteaudun, whilst inscriptions reminded Frenchmen of the year 1792, the commencement of their great revolutionary war, as preceding the date 1870, when they were called upon for still greater military efforts of patriotic devotion. Inscribed upon a band of white linen ran the stirring words, "Citizens, the country is in danger," calling to mind the old song of the first Republic:

"La patrie est en danger !
Affligez-vous, jeunes fillettes.
La patrie est en danger !
Tous les garçons vont s'engager.
Ne croyez pas que l'étranger
Vienne pour vous conter fleurettes.
Il vient pour vous égorger,
La patrie est en danger !"

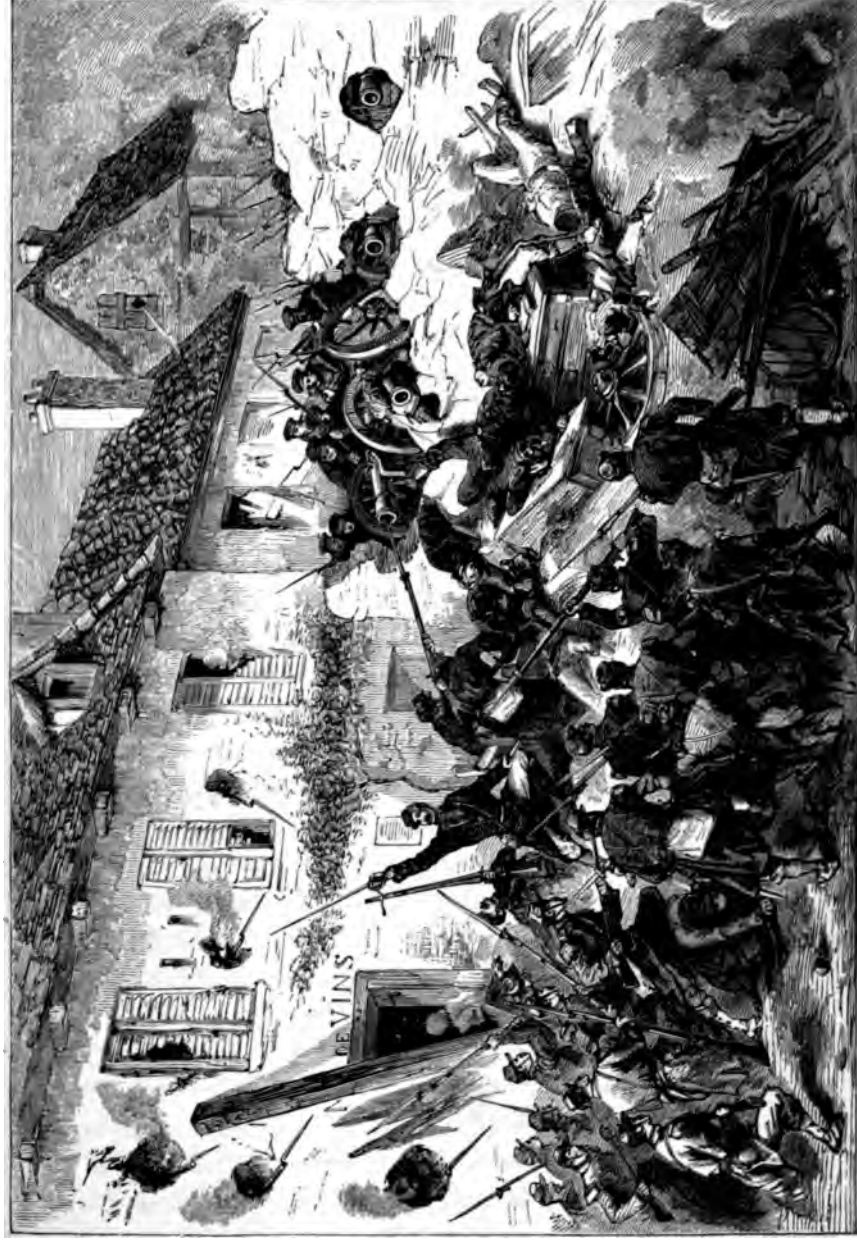
Upon the platform were various officers of the National Guard, with Dr. Bertillon, the Mayor of the Arrondissement, and the clerks, whose business was to

enrol the names of all who were willing to join the marching battalions* and to make themselves disposable, not merely for local service, but for any action that may be required. The proceeding was constantly witnessed and applauded by a multitude of spectators, many of whom were the friends, parents, sisters, wives, or sweethearts of the young men who thus gave proof of their spirit. The drum beat at intervals, as the work went on, to arouse the attention of all within hearing, and frequently there marched up an entire battalion of National Guard, which inscribed itself *in toto* on the register.

Such was the internal aspect of Paris, from a military point of view, during the earlier times of the siege. Meanwhile, the forts, mostly manned by the regular troops and the naval contingents, were busy firing upon the enemy, who were entrenching themselves on the heights, and in the woods and villages around the city. After the preliminary fight at Châtillon (Sept. 19), no fresh sortie or reconnaissance—as the earlier advances upon the German positions were more modestly termed; it being the fashion, moreover, with the military authorities to call a sortie a reconnaissance when it failed—was made till September 23, when General Vinoy ventured to occupy the village of Villejuif, to the direct south of the city. On the same day, the Germans were driven out of Pierrefitte, a village in advance of St. Denis; and various trifling reconnaissances subsequently took

* This division of the National Guard was instituted by General Trochu, by decrees dated Oct. 15th and 19th. The marching battalions, as their name implies, were to participate in the various reconnaissances and sorties. The National Guards, not forming part of these battalions, merely did duty within the city.

place in the direction of Neuilly-sur-Marne and the Plateau d'Avron, on the east of Paris. September 30th saw the fights of L'Hay and Chevilly, on the south, when the French were repulsed, and one of their brigadier-generals, Guilhem, killed. Following these encounters came another combat at Châtillon, prefaced by a desperate fight at Bagneux, when the ill-fated Count de Dampierre—a leading member of the French Jockey Club, and commander of the Côte d'Or Gardes Mobiles—lost his life in an heroic endeavour to seize a Prussian barricade, bristling with cannon, garnished with infantry, and protected, moreover, by the enemy's sharpshooters, installed in the adjoining houses. Though this was at last captured, the French were subsequently again repulsed, and, on returning into Paris, they found the western portion of the city lit up by the glare of fire. A shell—from Mont Valérien, it is said—had set the famous Palace of St. Cloud in flames. The battle at La Malmaison (west of Paris), on October 21st—when 5,000 men, under General Ducrot, fought for four hours, and at one moment carried some of the enemy's positions—was no longer termed a reconnaissance. The Parisians were sick of the word; hence this expedition was designated a "*sortie*;" the loss of two field pieces and of over 400 men giving it a somewhat serious aspect. The real object of these preliminary fights was to enlarge the circle of investment; but this purpose was not attained, as on every occasion of note the Parisian army returned with hundreds of dead and wounded, and without having gained an inch of ground worth having. The official reports, and the newspaper accounts, consoled the Parisians by expatiating on the "good conduct and



THE FRENCH ATTACKING THE BARRICADE AT DAGNEUX.

excellent bearing of the troops," and on the fact that "their retreat had been accomplished in good order;" with the inevitable addendum that "considerable losses had been inflicted on the enemy." Meanwhile, it was reported, in a semi-official manner, throughout the city, that "these fights had no object beyond trying and hardening the troops before leading them, in a short time, into more important engagements."

II. SPIES AND SIGNALS.

Prior to the investment of the city—indeed, almost as soon as the war commenced—the Parisians became afflicted with a peculiar craze, christened *spyophobia*, and recalling, in a measure, one of the most notable features of the Reign of Terror. This delusion—the infatuated victims of which conscientiously believed Paris to be choke-full of German spies—was heralded, at the epoch of the first French reverses, by the familiar cry, "We are betrayed!" The Parisians, in their anxiety to discover and punish their betrayers, grew suspicious of everyone and everything around them, and food was found for the spy-hunter's exaggerated zeal among his own compatriots, as well as among the many harmless foreigners sojourning in Paris. Of course, with such a mania abroad, any kind of extraneous accent or appearance furnished particular grounds for suspicion, it being all the same to the *spyophagist* whether his victim was a Briton or a Belgian, a Chinaman or a Chilian, a Dane or a Dutchman, a Greenlander or a Greek, a Pole or a Portuguese, a Swede or a Spaniard, a Turk or a Yankee; for he had lost sight of all other nationalities save his own and that of the enemy. Woe to the unlucky wight, pro-

vincial or foreigner, who ventured to point at any object out of doors, to look at the name of a street, to take a note, or to ask for the slightest information! He was almost inevitably arrested, and, indeed, his life was frequently placed in peril; for even if he was so fortunate as to escape all violence at the hands of his captors, he was frequently confined for several hours in the company of rogues and drunkards, who, being seized with a sudden fit of patriotism, would revenge themselves for their own incarceration by maltreating the presumed Prussian spy. The purest patriots and the most exalted personalities were alike powerless to secure immunity from suspicion, and prior to the commencement of the siege, even General Trochu himself (Governor of Paris, and Commander-in-Chief as he was) experienced the consequences of this contagious craze.

That over-zealous individual, the National Guard—well worthy of Talleyrand's celebrated rebuff—spotted spies amongst his own comrades, as well as in the ranks of the Garde Mobile, and the Gendarmerie. The comparatively unknown undress of a French admiral was in his eyes undoubtedly a Prussian uniform. He pounced upon many a provincial sapeur pompier and many an Alsatian working-man, accusing them of connivance with the foe. The cocotte and the sister of charity were particular objects of his distrust, and he, moreover, hunted for secret despatches or contraband arms in the basket of the rag-picker, and even accused the inoffensive pecheur à la ligne—seeking to supplement his meagre rations with a dish of gudgeon—of making the exercise of the gentle art a pretext for spying out the weak points in the defences of the Seine. Even by assuming an air of the utmost in-

difference to everything around, one could not always steer clear of the spy-hunter's persecutions; whilst the possession of *laisser-passers* and papers proving one's identity was really no protection whatever. "Prussian spies were so cunning," it was said, "they were precisely the persons to have papers, either forged or stolen, about them."

Among the earlier victims of the mania were four *grandes dames*, *Mmes. de Pourtalès* and *de Bahègue*, the *Duchess Tascher de la Pagerie*, and the Countess *Stéphanie Tascher*—who, so one was told, had all been in active communication with the enemy. Indeed, it was stated that the first two were in confinement at the *Château de Vincennes*, and that they would inevitably be shot, as court-martials knew of no exception for the fair sex. These assertions created quite a stir in Paris, and the Parisians looked anxiously forward to the military execution of these *élégantes*, who but a short time previously had been among the most brilliant ornaments of the Imperial Court.

A momentary abatement of the craze followed the decree expelling from France all the German subjects hitherto resident in the country. In Paris, many thousands of Germans obeyed this order to quit,* among them being a perfect swarm of hotel, café, and restaurant waiters—the *Grand Hôtel* alone losing thirty-five *garçons* of Teutonic origin at one fell swoop. The German waiter had long thrived in Paris; for the gift of languages, which he almost invariably

* Previous to this decree of expulsion, it was estimated that there were 188,000 Germans resident in Paris. In the month of January, 1871, prior to the capitulation, the city still sheltered a German colony of about 700 persons—mainly invalids, old men, and children, who had been unable to obey the decree of expulsion.

possessed, made him particularly useful in establishments frequented by foreigners. Prior to the German exodus, it may be mentioned, the landlord of a café and hotel in the Champs Elysées—a Prussian by birth—was nearly murdered by his own customers for having imprudently expressed a belief in the eventual triumph of the Fatherland. Every day throughout the month of August the newspapers teemed with accounts of how spies had been arrested—now, whilst walking on the boulevard in military disguise: now, whilst riding by the Champ de Mars and inspecting the manœuvres of the troops; and now, whilst prowling round about the fortifications in ouvrier costume. One day an unfortunate Spaniard was hustled, dragged, and cuffed by an excited crowd in the Palais Royal. On another occasion, an elderly man, hard-featured and unusually tall, was mobbed on the pretext that he must be of the opposite sex—and consequently a Prussian spy. The *Figaro* even started the idea that most of the blind beggars in Paris were spies, with the result that a number of poor creatures, infirm and old, were odiously maltreated by an excited populace. Another organ of public opinion—a fugitive periodical called *Les Nouvelles*—published an article entitled "English Spies," and proposed that to simplify the question of whether the English in Paris were spies or not, they should all of them at once be shot. In consequence of this suggestion a disagreeable adventure befell an English journalist, who was accused of being a spy, whilst in the midst of a crowd on the boulevards. He succeeded in mounting on a chair, and explained that he was purely and simply a "journaliste Anglais"—pointing out, at the same time, to the excited citizens around him, that they ought

to be grateful for his remaining in Paris. "If any one doubts me," he added, "let us go to the nearest commissary of police." For once in a way the crowd was satisfied with their victim's explanation, and after shaking hands with the "journaliste Anglais" (none other than Mr. Labouchere), they allowed him to depart in peace. Mr. George Augustus Sala was, however, far less fortunate than the "Besieged Resident." Arrested as a spy on the eve of the Revolution of September 4, he was cast into a filthy cell at the police post of the Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle, which was already crowded with ruffians accused of crimes of violence, thieves, and vagabonds of the very lowest description. Depraved and vitiated as these denizens of the police post might be, they were still Frenchmen; and in their patriotic abhorrence of the Prussian spy, they subjected the genial author of "Paris Herself Again" to a series of the grossest outrages, of which he subsequently wrote "that he shuddered to recall them, and that many of them he could not record." It was only through Lord Lyons's agency that, after a series of vicissitudes, Mr. Sala was eventually set at liberty by the Prefect of Police, who, at the moment of signing the order for his release, was actually preparing for flight—for the hours of the Second Empire were numbered, and the advent of the Republic was at hand.

Ill treated as Mr. Sala undoubtedly was, he still managed to escape with life. Some victims of the spy mania were less fortunate. One day, it is recorded, "a wretched égoutier working about the sewers was seen by a zealous National Guard, who at once gave an alarm. Three hundred more National Guards turned out and stalked the égoutier, who was

blown to pieces the next time he put his head out of the sewer. The mistake was regretted, but the consolation was volunteered that it was far better that a hundred innocent men should suffer than that one Prussian should escape."* During the war there were, of course, in different parts of France, numerous arrests of individuals who were really in communication with the enemy; but in Paris the number of these was very limited. On the same Monday afternoon that the telegraphic communication of the French capital with the rest of the world was cut off by the advancing Germans, a spy, disguised as a gendarme, was seized at Vanves, just outside the city; and in this instance, when the individual arrested saw there was no escape possible, he admitted that he was really a Prussian. Among the other authentic cases, two may be selected as presenting some curious features. In the first instance, a captain of a company of *Francs-tireurs*, who had received his appointment from the municipality of Neuilly on his representation that he was a relative of no less a personage than Marshal Macmahon, eventually proved to be a German officer; and on the second occasion, it was discovered that the secretary of M. Etienne Arago, Mayor of Paris, a young fellow between five-and-twenty and thirty years of age, whom Rochefort was protecting in ignorance of his Teutonic origin, was drawing up private reports of everything which came under his observation, for the benefit of the Prussian Government. Hardt, the ex-Prussian lieutenant who, being sentenced to death by a council of war, was shot early one morning in an enclosed court of the *Ecole Mili-*

* *Morning Post*, October 6, 1870.

taire, was not apprehended in Paris, but at Pouilly, between Orleans and Bourges. As in many instances presumed spies arrested in Paris speedily proved that they were nothing of the sort, the newspapers endeavoured to show that if a few mistakes were made, there were yet numerous instances of *bonâ-fide* spies being apprehended. We were even told one morning that on the preceding day nineteen spies had been shot in the moat of the Fort of Montrouge; but the account of this military execution, circumstantial as it was, eventually proved to be entirely false. Equally groundless was the absurd story that all the gas-lighters in Paris were Prussians in disguise; and most of the anecdotes of Germans, arrayed in French uniforms, visiting the detached forts and the ramparts, were simply fabricated by journalists eager to foster the popular mania.

Contradicted and disproved as these "nouvelles à la main" might be, they still retained a magnetic attraction for the Parisians, who, closing their ears to truth, eagerly swallowed the most improbable "canards." Prior to the investment the papers told them that, as telegrams in cipher were placed under interdict, the spies were making use of a special vocabulary, in which each word had a different signification to that given in ordinary dictionaries; the phrase "I saw your uncle yesterday," implying "The Guard left to-day," and so on. Then, "an old French spy" wrote to the *Figaro* and denounced every tenth inhabitant in the city as "suspect." A proposition was also made that outside the door of each house in Paris a board should be hung indicating the name, profession, nationality and age of the various tenants; and one excited spy-hunter suggested that all the abandoned villa residences

in the environs of the capital were probably in the occupation of German spies, who were doubtless excavating from one of these points a subterranean way into the city. One report (and apparently a true one) which caused the greatest sensation in Paris, was to the effect that, when Prince Albrecht of Prussia arrived with a detachment of troops at Provins, he at once requisitioned eighteen suits of clothes, such as are worn by the French peasantry, for the purpose of transforming a like number of the men under his command into as many spies.

In the neighbourhood of the ramparts—those bulwarks which were “to stem the irruption of the barbarian hordes bent on the destruction of civilization itself”—the spy mania continued to flourish throughout the siege. Even Marshal Vaillant—albeit Member of the Committee of Defence—was apprehended whilst visiting the fortifications; but in this instance the victim’s Imperialist antecedents had more to do with his arrest than the presumption that he was in communication with the enemy. He was only set at liberty after being taken to the residence of General Trochu, who was by this incident led to issue the following order of the day:—

“For some days past the National Guards on duty in the capital, especially at the gates of the fortifications and on the ramparts, carried away by their zealous care of the interests entrusted to their protection, have interpreted their orders with a degree of rigour that may be prejudicial to the defence. Engineers, and many agents of different orders—even officers in uniform, some being engaged in important missions, and all having official permits—have been stopped and impeded in their duties. It has even occurred that vehicles laden with useful materials have been stopped. These proceedings cause great difficulty to various branches of the public service engaged in promoting the national defence. It is important that the commanders of posts should free the minds of their sub-

ordinates from apprehensions and mistrusts which are not justified by facts."

The lamented Comte de Noé, better known as "Cham," the caricaturist, in which capacity he delighted with his humorous pencil three generations of Parisians, was also apprehended as a spy whilst strolling near the ramparts at Clichy. No papers being found upon his person, he was asked his name, and on his giving that of De Noé, loud shouts arose of "Death to the spy! Hear his frightful accent!" The witty artist was of course a Frenchman, but he did not speak his native tongue perfectly correctly; for he was afflicted with a slight English accent, acquired by a prolonged sojourn across the Channel in the days of his youth. A National Guard happened to recognize him in his artistic capacity, and told the mob that he was "Cham," the caricaturist; still, as he had given his real name, and not his pseudonym, the crowd persisted in believing him to be a Prussian spy, and an officer had to intervene to rescue him from the hands of his excited captors.

Mr. O'Sullivan, ex-United States Minister at Lisbon, was another notable victim of the spy mania. When the advance of the German army upon Paris became known, he made, in a non-official capacity, a fruitless effort to secure a suspension of hostilities. Provided with a letter from Mr. Washburn (United States Minister in Paris) to General Sherman, who was attached to the German staff, he started for the enemy's head-quarters, but was arrested a first time as a spy just outside the capital. On being set at liberty by M. Jules Favre, he made a second attempt, and on this occasion succeeded in reaching the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's head-quarters. He was not allowed

to proceed to the German quartier général, and finding all chances of obtaining an armistice quite hopeless he set out again for Paris. On reaching the Fort of Aubervilliers he was again arrested as a spy, conducted into the city, and imprisoned at Mazas until released by an order of the Government. His efforts in favour of France produced no other fruit than ill-treatment at the hands of the people he was so desirous to serve.

At a later epoch, Suzanne Lagier, the vocalist, brought about the arrest of a Pole, who, so she swore, was in communication with the enemy. This individual was none other than Dombrowski, who became a general under the Commune of Paris, and who was supposed to have been killed when the regular troops entered the capital. He has, however, since turned up in London in connection with a case of forging Russian bank-notes. At the moment of his power in 1871, he revenged himself upon Madame Lagier by having her arrested, in her turn, and she might have shared the fate of the hostages, had not Delescluze intervened and procured her release. The instances of women arresting men as Prussian spies were not rare during the siege; but contrary cases were far more frequent. A certain Madame de Beaulieu, who had joined a regiment of Mobiles as cantinière—less with the view of catering to their thirst than with that of tending the wounded on the battle-field—was denounced as a spy simply because her hands were "so white;" and she actually remained in confinement for four days at the Prefecture of Police. Another lady, who kept an ambulance in the Rue de Bagneux, was similarly treated; and a third, who wore the Red Cross brassard, was, during the earlier part of the

siege, dragged from her carriage while driving in the vicinity of the fortifications, merely because her coachman was looking in a direction where some firing was going on.

One of the most disconsolate individuals of this epoch was M. Alexis Godillot, the well-known army tailor and contractor for military equipments. In a letter which he wrote to the papers complaining of the unjust charges brought against him, he recalled the fact that for years and years he had been the object of slanderous aspersions. During the reign of Louis Philippe it was discovered that his features presented an extraordinary likeness to those of the Duc d'Aumale; and his enemies, refusing to regard this as a chance occurrence, asserted that he was an illegitimate scion of the House of Orleans, in which capacity he doubtless received a large allowance from the king. From this supposition, and its attendant *ennuis*, M. Godillot thought himself delivered when the Republic was proclaimed in 1848; but before long he found his person compared to that of General Cavaignac, and absurd rumours of a possible relationship again being circulated. Cavaignac fell, Louis-Napoleon governed in his stead, and the Second Empire was installed. M. Godillot breathed again. He was powerless, however, to escape the pursuit of Nemesis, and after being likened to the Duc d'Aumale and to General Cavaignac, it was now insinuated that so marked was his resemblance to Napoleon III. that he could not possibly be other than a bastard Bonaparte. Thus, M. Godillot's life was made a burden to him. Fortunately, after the 4th of September there was no member of the Government to whom he could be personally compared, and

popular slander, not to lose so favourite a victim, had to assume a different, but an equally, if not more disagreeable form. It was proclaimed throughout Paris that he had in stock at his cellars at St. Ouen, 30,000 rifles and 300,000 cartridges destined for the Prussian army : and he was also accused of neglecting his contracts for equipping the French troops with the view of assisting the enemy. Rumours of the existence of concealed arms and war material in Paris were rife throughout the siege, and it would appear that in some cases rifles and German uniforms were really discovered—notably in the storehouses of MM. Cahen-Lyon ; but in this case the equipments seized by the authorities had been prepared for a Hanoverian legion which was to have been raised to co-operate with the French forces, but whose services were declined by Marshal Lebœuf, soon after the declaration of war.

Apropos of military equipments a great sensation was caused in Paris, during the month of September, by some Gardes Mobiles discovering that their cartridges contained sand instead of powder. "Treason!" had often been shouted if the shot did not fit the gun, and now, once again, the familiar cry was raised. Twenty cases of similar cartridges were said to have been discovered in the Vincennes arsenal, and several others at the Hotel de Ville. To whom could the fraud be attributed? To some dishonest contractor, emulative of the American purveyors of shoes with paper soles, and merely anxious to benefit his own pocket, or to some one who had sold himself to the enemy? Patriotism, of course, assumed the latter to be the case, and immense indignation was expressed at this new Bismarckian device, until there appeared an official communication from General Trochu, stating

that these cartridges were specially prepared for the use of recruits practising their fire, and that they had been served out to the regular army as service ammunition by mistake.

Later on, it was complained that the bullets of many cartridges were far below the regulation weight; and of course the customary cry of "Treason!" followed the discovery. It was pointed out, however, that there had been a similar occurrence during the Crimean war, and that the bullets in question had been artfully perforated by an insect called the *Syreæ juvencus*.

Co-existent with the spy mania there flourished in Paris, soon after the commencement of the blockade, another craze, that of mistaking a light in an attic, or fifth-floor window, at night-time, for a signal, preconcerted with the enemy. The most ludicrous incidents distinguished this panic. In one instance, an aged citizen, recently married to a charming young wife, was suddenly dragged from his bed by National Guards, and passed the remainder of the night in the watch-house. His wife's Abigail had placed a couple of candles in her window as a signal to some one who sighed at the feet of her mistress, and hence the error. The affair had a still more comic turn for all but the husband, who was released next morning. On another occasion, an old woman, who was really engaged in making lint, was on the point of being strangled, when it was discovered that the red and green signals, plainly visible in her window from the street, were made by an unconscious parrot, the poor old lady's sole companion. No matter in what quarter of Paris the presumed signal was perceived, the house it emanated from was at once

invaded by National Guards, and a number of innocent people were frequently carried off to the police post, and subjected to gross ill-treatment. Such proportions did the craze assume, that it was even proposed that the Government should issue a decree forbidding any kind of light whatsoever, after dark, in any room situated above the second floor. The victims of the mania mostly submitted to the invasion of their domiciles by an excited mob as a necessary evil of the times; but a volunteer artillery man, who wrote to the authorities complaining that, in his absence, his rooms had been ransacked and his aged mother frightened out of her wits (on the slanderous pretext that some fuses had been sent off from one of his windows), added that should there be a repetition of the occurrence whilst he was at home, he should not hesitate to receive the mob at the door of his apartment with a fixed bayonet in his hand.

Similar protestations soon caused General Trochu to issue a proclamation, in which he remarked that, "under the most frivolous pretexts, numerous violations of domiciles have taken place, and peaceable citizens have been maltreated. Even the flags of friendly nations, whose sympathies are acquired to the French Republic, have been powerless to protect the houses where they are displayed. I have ordered an inquiry to be opened on this subject, and I command that all persons guilty of these abusive practices shall be arrested. A service of vigilance has been organized, so as to frustrate the endeavours of the enemy to keep up communications with the interior of the city; and I remind everybody that, excepting in cases foreseen by law, every citizen's residence is inviolable."

By the side of the many blunders of the signal

craze, there seem to have been a few really authentic cases. For instance, a circumstantial account appeared in the *Français* of the apprehension of a family of Prussian spies, who were discovered letting off white and blue fusees up their dining-room chimney. Two men, wearing trousers corresponding with those of the Uhlan uniform, were also said to have been arrested whilst installing a green light on the roof of a house in the Rue de la Victoire; and, in the Rue Lafayette, another individual clad in ambulance costume, was seized in the act of flashing an electric light in the direction of St. Denis. The houses in the vicinity of the fortifications were particular objects of suspicion throughout the siege, and nigh to the ramparts at Courcelles there occurred, one afternoon in October, a very singular incident. The passer-by might have perceived half-a-dozen Gardes Mobiles peppering away, apparently at a stack of chimneys on the top of a very tall house facing the railway. A more attentive inspection, however, discovered a man in military uniform, holding a blue flag in one hand and a red flag in the other, and wearing in front of him a long apron painted dull red, with narrow white markings, to resemble the brickwork of the neighbouring chimneys, between which he crouched. He had, it seems, been observed waving the flags in question, and had thus become the target of the Gardes Mobiles, all of whom, however, fired wide of their mark. In an instant, from the time when first observed, he had slid down the long slated roof, and clinging to the stone cornice, had dropped on to the iron balcony of the floor beneath and disappeared through one of the windows. The Gardes Mobiles at once obtained admission to the house—a very large

one, with, apparently, all its apartments occupied—which they searched from top to bottom for upwards of an hour, without, however, encountering the smallest trace of the daring Prussian officer—for so he was pronounced to be—who had signalled to his comrades in a populous quarter of Paris in broad daylight.

III. QUEUES AND RATIONS.

The numerous precautions taken, both by the Imperial administration and by the Government of National Defence, to ensure as complete a provisioning of Paris as possible during the impending siege, have already been detailed at length.* Scarcely was the investment completed, however, than it became evident that diners fins and parties carrées would have to be altogether dispensed with if a prolonged resistance was to be offered to the enemy. In the first place, although a large quantity of provisions of various kinds had been collected together, yet, taking the ordinary consumption as a guide, these would not last very long unless great discretion was observed; and, secondly, the pecuniary means at the disposal of most of the inhabitants were as limited as was the supply of food. The moment had come for Paris to throw aside all its prodigal habits, and to take a lesson in practical economy. It did so more cheerfully than might have been expected, and the viveurs of the boulevard found out that it was quite possible to exist without sitting down every day to a series of *recherchés* repasts. It would, indeed, have been difficult, at this juncture

* *Ante*, vol. i. pp. 143–158.

to satisfy the varied tastes of the Parisian epicure, for the menus of the grands restaurants soon exhibited a painful uniformity. Many of them, in fact, closed their doors directly the city was invested. The cabinets particuliers of the Maison Dorée and the Café Anglais, for instance, became dark and deserted, not a single dinner nor supper being served throughout the siege in the Grand Seize—where princes of the blood and of the Bourse, grandes dames and demi mondaines had so often banqueted in the careless days of César Postiche's omnipotence.

Paris, in fact, was without game and without fish—save salted cod, red herrings, and a few gudgeon caught from time to time in the Seine—had hardly any poultry, and very little meat; no rare vegetables, and neither cheese nor butter, on which the French cuisine so largely depends. Europe no longer laid itself under contribution that Paris might dine sumptuously, and did not even care whether she dined at all. Russia had given over sending its woodcocks, hazel hens and ptarmigans; Italy its kids, larks, and pheasants; England its grouse and mackerel: Norway its salmon and snipes; Germany its hares and hams; Spain its partridges and olives; Belgium its oysters and pigeons, and Holland its turbot and herrings. And it was the same with home consignments. One could hardly expect that Strasburg besieged would send its pâtés de foie gras; Périgord forwarded no more truffles, Fontainebleau no more frogs, and Burgundy no more snails. Indeed, very soon the question became, not so much what one would dine off, as whether one would dine at all.

Meat was, of course, the grand difficulty. It has been already mentioned that the butchers originally

refused to sell at the prices fixed by the authorities, and that considerable inconvenience resulted. On the 28th of September, the Government took a second measure of precaution, limiting the supply as well as the price of meat. It was resolved that the maximum number of animals to be killed daily should not exceed 500 oxen and 4,000 sheep. Each *arrondissement* was divided into four classes, and every four days a certain number of butchers in each class received an ox and four sheep, which quantity, taking the ordinary consumption into consideration, was quite inadequate to satisfy the wants of the customers. The butchers, therefore, only opened their shops on every fourth day—the morning when the meat arrived—when they found themselves besieged, not merely by their regular clientèle, but by those usually dealing with other butchers, whose shops were shut. The arrangements at the public slaughter-houses were, moreover, so defective, that when a butcher's turn for supply came round, he was frequently told that it was not certain whether he could have any meat at all, and his cart repeatedly went home empty.

The result of this state of things was that—recalling the familiar adage of the early bird catching the worm—crowds, or to use the French term, "*queues*," began to assemble outside the butchers' shops, long before their hour of opening had arrived, with the view of securing some portion of the meat on sale before it was all gone. These queues, which subsisted throughout the investment, soon constituted one of the most characteristic inner-life features of the siege. They were first formed in the more populous and poorer districts; but, before a couple of days, had spread to the most aristocratic quarters of the capital. Originally, they

commenced about five A.M., in front of the iron railings that invariably shut in the Parisian butcher's shop; and as the mornings were then bright and balmy, the inconvenience, although considerable, was by no means excessive. But when it was found that only half of those who had waited since five o'clock had succeeded in getting served, the queues began to collect much earlier, and the hours of waiting gradually lengthened, until they extended far back into the night. In the populous quarters two o'clock was commonly the hour when the first dozen women would assemble. Some came to the rendezvous provided with chairs or stools and with chauffe-pieds; and at intervals, members of their family would bring them hot bowls of soup or coffee, or they would arrange to relieve each other every hour or so. These proceedings gave rise to endless disputes. Such as found themselves constrained to wait standing, objected to their neighbours sitting. Frozen-footed individuals, unprovided with foot-warmers, grumbled at those who possessed them; women whose husbands were on duty at the ramparts, and had no one to bring them warm and comforting fluids, protested against refreshments being allowed; while the practice of one member of a family relieving another gave rise to constant vituperation, to struggles, clawings, and blows.

The situation had become positively intolerable, when the Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, with the futile hope of allaying the popular discontent, resolved to distribute the supply of meat at his disposal proportionately among the twenty arrondissements of the city, at the same time authorizing the mayors to place the inhabitants of their respective districts upon rations.

The rationing was effected on an almost uniform plan throughout Paris. Each family had to apply for a ration card at the mairie of the arrondissement to which it belonged—the number of persons it comprised being set forth in writing. This statement was then verified by an official, who conferred with the concierge of the house where the applicants resided, and if found correct, a ration card was at once delivered. On some cards the days of the month were printed, being obliterated in turn when the rations were purchased; while other cards were provided with detachable coupons. Subjoined is a facsimile of the card delivered in the second arrondissement, which extends between the Boulevard Sebastopol and the Madeleine, on the left-hand side of the central boulevards going west, being limited on the south by the Halles, the Palais Royal, and the Place Vendôme:—

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

MAIRIE DU 2^{ME} ARRONDISSEMENT.

CARTE DE FAMILLE.

Contre présentation de cette carte, Marie X. —
démorant Boulevard —, a droit d'acheter ou faire
acheter aux dates indiquées sur les coupons ci-
dessous — Rations de viande dans les boucheries
municipales de l'Arrondissement. Cette carte est
munie de coupons. La délivrance des rations sera
constatée par le détachement du coupon du jour de
distribution.

"Par délégation du Maire."

(Signature.)

Le porteur de cette carte ne devra jamais dé-
tacher lui-même le coupon. Il devra le faire
détacher soit par le boucher, soit par son restaura-
teur.

As regards the proportionate distribution of the meat, some arrondissements were more favoured than others during the earlier days of the siege, the daily ration per head ranging from 80 to 100 grammes (2½ oz. to 3½ oz.). The butchers were ordered by Government both to display placards indicating the different categories and qualities of meat on sale, and to deliver memoranda specifying the quality and quantity of the meat supplied to each particular purchaser. With beef they were empowered to deliver a fifth part of bone, no matter from what joint the ration might be cut; but in selling mutton they were forbidden to make up the weight with bones not adhering to the meat, such as are delivered in ordinary times, when the French butcher is entitled to supply one quarter of his order in bones—christened “*rejouissance*” by the Parisian housewife.

Prior to the rationing, the sale of meat was usually superintended by members of the National Guard; but with the new order of things, there came the organization of various special corps, entitled Corps Civiques, Gardes Civiques, or Gardes Urbaines, according to the arrondissements. They were popularly known, however, as the “*Bataillon des Infirmes*,” being composed of individuals of all classes exempt from service in the National Guard, on the score of age or infirmities. Limited as their physical capabilities might be, they displayed peculiar acuteness in looking after “*No. 1*,” for on turning up at eight o’clock in the morning at some butcher’s shop, outside which a miserable and hungry crowd had been waiting for hours in the cold, their first care was invariably to see a good piece of meat set aside for themselves. Then they proceeded to distribute among the weary

bystanders a series of numbers, corresponding with the place the recipient occupied in the crowd, and representing the order of distribution when the sale began. The crowd would comprise, at times, some three or four hundred persons, for whom there would only be two hundred numbers, whilst the supply of meat sufficed perhaps for 120 or 130 rations. When the hungry wretches who had been waiting so long for a morsel of meat learnt that the supply was exhausted, their disappointment led them to shriek forth insults and imprecations against the unfortunate "infirmes" who had the temerity to make the announcement; and in some instances he and his comrades were victims of the violence of the mob. Sometimes, also, when an unpopular Garde Civique presented himself with the view of distributing the numbers, the crowd snatched the bag containing them out of his hand, and a frantic scramble for the coveted bits of pasteboard ensued. So defectively was the rationing organized in some parts of Paris, that the correspondent of a London newspaper was unable to obtain a morsel of meat for himself or family during ten successive days, although the different members of his household repeatedly relayed each other in waiting outside the butcher's shop. By a strange fatality the meat was always gone when his turn to be served came round. He had had to live, therefore, on ham, rice, and sardines, for ten days; when one morning he espied the grating of a butcher's shop in the Rue Lafayette still open, and a few pieces of mutton hanging from the hooks. Unfortunately he was without his ration card, and whilst a friend ran home to fetch it, the Gardes Civiques, whom he had acquainted with his position, coolly divided the

remaining joints among themselves ; and on the arrival of the ration ticket, informed him that all the meat was gone. He complained of this conduct at the head office of the Garde Civique, and on being told that he must have made a mistake, as such a thing was quite impossible, he retaliated by exclaiming that, according to the official reports there were as many rations furnished to the butchers as there were mouths to feed in the arrondissement ; that as he had had no meat during ten successive days some one must have eaten his share ; and that, from what he had seen, he was positive it had fallen into the hands of the very people who were placed there to represent "equality and fraternity." This outburst only procured for our unfortunate journalist the epithet of "insolent," and a request to instantly withdraw.

The difficulty experienced in obtaining either beef or mutton, even when there were still a large number of sheep and oxen left in the city, gave a considerable impetus to the consumption of horse-flesh. At the commencement of the siege some twenty or thirty horses were slaughtered per day, but on the last three days of September—in fact directly the supply of butcher's meat was limited by authority—no less than 141, 195, and 275 horses were respectively slaughtered. There were, at the beginning of October, twenty-six shops in Paris where horse-flesh was exclusively sold, and the opening of new ones was announced almost daily. Originally established in the poorer quarters, they were, like civilization, destined to travel westwards, and "viande de cheval" became as much in demand in the aristocratic neighbourhood of the Champs Elysées as in the impoverished districts of Belleville and Montmartre. A market and slaughterhouse for horses, which

were established on the Boulevard d'Enfer, soon acquired paramount importance; and the Government, on finding that the Parisians took so kindly to this species of nutriment, issued a decree establishing a maximum price at which horse-meat should be sold. This was originally fixed (October 7) at 1*fr.* 40*c.* the kilogramme for the best parts, and 80*c.* for the inferior portions—or 6*d.* and 3½*d.* per lb., English; but a subsequent ministerial arrêté (October 15) authorized the sale of filet and faux filet de cheval at 8½*d.* per lb. On the 20th of October the Government decreed that all horses destined for food should be sold at the horse market, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 8 A.M. to 11 A.M. only; that the condition of the animals should be ascertained by veterinary examination, and that they should only be killed in special abattoirs set apart for the purpose. Nine days later the number of horses to be killed per diem was restricted to 600, for the Government was already growing anxious as to the probable duration of the provisions. At the same time the minimum price of horse-beef was lowered to 2½*d.* per lb., the butchers being, on the other hand, authorized to sell "filet de cheval" at whatever price they pleased, the tax on the other parts remaining the same.

Meanwhile, the "Société Hippophagique" took care to inform the Parisians, by means of constant paragraphs in the newspapers, that "viande de cheval" was superior to the flesh of the finest bullock; that the soup produced from it was finer, fuller of flavour, and more suitable to delicate stomachs than any other; and that its fat, of an oily nature, was a good substitute for butter, now very difficult to procure. On application being made to the Archbishop of Paris, that

prelate readily authorized the faithful to employ horse fat and oil for culinary purposes on fast days—a fact which the promoters of hippophagie took especial care to announce. One of the successes of the hour was ass's flesh—a kind of veal with a poultry flavour, looking peculiarly white and tempting, and sold at the rate of 2s. 5d. a pound. "The proprietor of the donkeys which had been the delight of the damsels of Paris who visited Robinson, and dined on fête days in the trees with their friends, the students, was not able to maintain his four-footed friends in these days of scarcity; so he opened a butcher's shop in the Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie, and regaled the Quartier Latin with the flesh that had been bestridden so gleefully only a few weeks previously."

It was on horse and mule and donkey flesh that the restaurants had to rely in composing their menus. At some establishments strangers were politely informed that dinners were only served to the regular clientèle, who had handed over their ration-cards to the proprietor; and at the établissements de bouillon, where most of the Garde Mobile dined when not on duty at the ramparts or the advanced forts, and which on this account appeared to be favoured as regards their meat supply, a notice appeared, at a very early date, over the doors, warning customers that by order of the authorities only one plate of meat would be supplied to each person—said plate, too, consisting of certainly not more than half-a-dozen mouthfuls. On patronizing one of the "prix fixe" establishments, such as the "Dîner de Paris," and the like, the following was the style of menu submitted to your choice:—

"Hors d'œuvres.—Sardines à l'huile, Saucisson de Lyon (ass or

horse, but commonly understood to be the former), boudin de table arillé, and boudin noir et blanc (horse).

Potages.—Vermicelle, Consommé, Pâte d'Italie (the bouillon or stock being, of course, made of horse-flesh).

Poisson.—Morue salée, Harengs saurs.

Entrées.—Pieds de mouton poulette, Foie sauté Lyonnaise, Rognons sautés (bullock's or horse's liver, repeated in another form), Bœuf à la Bourgogne (horse-flesh), Bœuf fumé façon Hambourg (ditto), Cœurs de mouton au riz, Cotelettes de porc salé, Filet de mulet à la reine d'Espagne, Tripe à la mode de Caen.

Rôtis.—Anon rôti (juvenile donkey).

Volaille.—None.

Gibier.—None.

Legumes.—Salsifis frits, Choux, Pommes de terre sautés (soon became very scarce).

Entremêts.—Beignets soufflés, Gélées aux fruits.

Dessert.—Noix, Noisettes.

Fromage.—None."

It may here be mentioned that a number of cantines nationales came to the rescue of the very poor. They were organized much on the same principle as English "soup kitchens," orders for food being distributed gratuitously to those who could not afford to pay for them, whilst the prices charged to less insolvent customers were extremely low. Thus, a plate of bouillon or first-rate broth, another of thick potato soup, and a lump of bread, might be obtained for twopence-half-penny.

The supply of bread was plentiful enough during the earlier times of the siege, and the Government having imposed a maximum price at which this all-important article of food should be sold,* the bakers were unable to abuse their position. They complained, however, somewhat bitterly, that they were forced to pay cash for flour which had hitherto been

* *Ante*, vol. i. p. 152,

purchased at thirty days' date, owing to the impossibility of discounting their bills. At the end of September the Government bought up all the wheat and flour in the city that it could lay its hands on; and steam mills were installed for the grinding of corn.

The precautions taken in reference to milk have already been enumerated. The general public was, however, soon compelled to fall back on the Swiss or American concentrated product; such fresh milk as was yielded by the cows in the hands of the authorities being sold or distributed at the mairies, or at special bureaux, exclusively to persons producing a medical certificate shewing that they were possessed of infant children.

On strolling through the Halles Centrales during the first fortnight in October, one found these magnificent markets, which had formerly overflowed with provisions of all kinds, for the most part empty—save the pavilions devoted to the storage of corn and flour. The only fish brought to market came from the Seine, and was naturally much sought after. A small dish of gudgeon mixed with bleak, suitable for two persons of very small appetites, could not be had under 1*s.* 8*d.*; whilst a fine Seine eel realized 12*s.* In reference to poultry—none of which was in good condition—live geese sold wholesale at 13*s.* per head; fowls and ducks ranged from 5*s.* 8*d.* to 9*s.* 8*d.* each, turkeys fetched £1 4*s.*, rabbits 5*s.* and 6*s.*, and pigeons 2*s.* apiece. Cheese had quite vanished from the Halles; but now and then in the course of one's rambles through the city, one came upon a cheesemonger's shop still open, where 1*s.* 8*d.* a lb. was asked for Gruyère, and 2*s.* for common English or American cheese. Salt butter,

of indifferent quality, might also occasionally be met with in the shops at 4s. per lb., all the fresh butter—which, by the way, eventually commanded 8s. the lb.—having been by this time consumed; though now and then a small pat, churned by some mysterious means, made its appearance at Chevet's, in the Palais Royal, and attracted crowds to view it from miles around. Eggs at this period were 2d. and 3d. each. Fruit—of which there appeared to be a considerable stock—had not risen in price, but green vegetables were sold at exorbitant rates—common cabbages and cauliflowers costing respectively 7d. and 1s. 2d. each, while carrots and turnips ranged from 10d. to 1s. 8d. the bundle; and the bushel of potatoes was never priced at less than 2s. 10d.

Owing to the species of panic which ensued consequent upon the restricted supply of fresh meat, salted and preserved provisions had by this time attained to fabulous prices. Australian mutton, beef and veal, for instance, were quadruple their ordinary rates; hams, until they were all bought up, realized 2s. 6d. the lb.; salted cod fetched over a shilling a lb., and dried herrings were 5d. each.* And yet the *Figaro* of October 3—following the example, oft referred to, of the French Princess, who, on being told that the people had no bread, asked why they did not eat buns—counselled its readers to resort to preserved provisions, citing the annexed list of prices for their guidance:—Half a pheasant, garnished with "foie gras" and truffles, 12s.; the same, minus the "foie

* All the prices given above were current in Paris between the 1st and 10th of October. A fortnight later, many articles of consumption were utterly unobtainable, and such as remained had doubled and trebled in value.

gras" and truffles, 7s. ; a partridge, with the bones removed, 6s. 6d.; the same, with the bones, 4s. 10d.; two snipes, stuffed with "foie gras" and truffles, 14s. 6d.; larks, garnished with ditto, 1s. 2d. each; leg (*not* a haunch) of venison, £1 4s.; truffled hare (which the *Figaro* recommended as extremely nourishing), 5s. 8d. the lb. A fowl garnished with "foie gras" and truffles at 9s. 8d. was recommended on the score of economy—a fowl of any size, minus the "foie gras," fetching at that moment within 2 shillings of the amount. Truffled "foie gras" was 12s. the box, and preserved asparagus, quoted as "very fine," 9s. 8d. the bottle.

The Parisians were assisted in their endeavours to eke out their meagre ration of fresh meat by all the medical and scientific men in the city; and on turning to the reports of the Academy of Sciences, one found that the discussions almost invariably had reference to new kinds of provisions. The virtues of green tea were argued *pro* and *con*; candles were suggested as a substitute for butter; processes for preserving meat were made public; we were even recommended to eat oats; the blood of sheep and oxen, and the nutriment to be derived from their bones and hoofs, were passed in review; a plan for producing instantaneous vegetables, the stems, leaves, and roots of which would be all equally tender, and equally available for food, was exposed with much theoretical logic; and we were invited to try a delicious plat, composed of a certain quantity of tallow—even in the state of a candle—mixed with corn reduced into a pulp, the whole being seasoned with salt and flavoured with a fried onion. Scientific men, moreover, informed us, that, because we felt hungry, it by no means followed we required to eat. "Mere hunger," said they, "is a very bad guide.

A common method of allaying its pangs, is to press the stomach tightly. It is quite certain that one physical sensation will get rid of another, such as hunger, which, moreover, may be dissipated by having recourse to inert substances, like sand, which certainly contains no sort of nourishment."

IV. MALCONTENTS AND MANIFESTATIONS.

The Parisians have always been a pleasure-loving people, and in these hard times the lack of amusements was greatly felt. Long as were the hours of waiting for rations, considerable as was the time given to drill or to searching for spies and signals, the day was of course not entirely taken up with these occupations, and the "besoin de distractions," which is a leading feature in the Parisian character, inevitably asserted its rights. There were no theatrical performances however, and no balls, whilst the concerts given for the benefit of the wounded were few and far between. The citizen anxious to while away an hour or so of an evening was thus irresistibly drawn to one or another of the numerous public clubs which had been opened on the morrow of the Revolution. Scarcely had the Government of National Defence secured the reins of power than a shoal of excited "patriots" of all colours and descriptions hastened from England, Belgium, and Switzerland, anxious for a share in the spoil. The authorities refused, however, to listen to the violent demagogues who assailed them with applications for appointments; and the disappointed partisans of the Red Republic—foremost among whom were Félix Pyat and the venerable Blanqui, relics of '48; Charles Delescluze, of the *Réveil* newspaper;

Gustave Flourens, the well-known "Rochefort" agitator, and Millière, Mottu, and Mégy—threw their whole energies into the creation of clubs, hoping to stir up the lower orders by their violent utterances, and by a sudden revulsion of popular feeling to precipitate the existing Government from power and instal themselves in its place. Clubs soon abounded throughout Paris, not invariably of a violent character, for those of the Folies-Bergère, Valentino, the Collège de France, and the Porte St. Martin were principally frequented by Republicans of moderate views. But it was very different at the Club of the Pré aux Clercs in the Rue du Bac, at the Club de la Reine Blanche at Montmartre, at the Salle Favié at Belleville, at the Club de la Patrie en Danger, where Blanqui presided, at that of the Cour des Miracles, at the Club de la Vengeance on the Boulevard Rochechouart, at the Montagnards on the Boulevard de Strasbourg, at the Club des Etats Unis d'Europe in the Rue Cadet, at the Club de 1870 installed in the ballroom of the Elysée Montmartre, and at various other gatherings of the Faubourg St. Antoine and the Faubourg du Temple. Here violence and folly reigned supreme, the murderous propositions of one orator forcibly contrasting with the ridiculous suggestions of another. Every one who had a plan, panacea, or invention calculated to save Paris and annihilate the Germans, whether it was by poisoning the waters of the Seine or letting loose the wild beasts of the Jardin des Plantes, by employing hand-bombs, "Satan fusees," or petroleum pumps, hastened to one of the clubs and communicated his project to the audience. Thither, moreover, flocked all those who had a grievance, real or imaginary, to ventilate, who were anxious to parade their antipathies in public, to

denounce the Government, the generals in command, the provision speculators, the police, the priesthood, the Prussians, or the fallen dynasty. As the days of the siege wore on, from amidst a chaos of impracticable suggestions and an accumulation of frantic appeals for sorties *en masse*, for more cannon, for Greek fire to destroy the foe and for the prompt punishment of traitors, one proposal disengaged itself and acquired pre-eminence, being promoted alike by the violent and the credulous: this was the establishment of the Commune of Paris.

It must be admitted that apparent grounds for considerable discontent were not wanting. Patriotism bitterly resented the fact that the Germans had been allowed to invest the city, and were now quietly entrenching themselves in the environs, unmolested. Hungry mortals were particularly irate both at the meagreness of the rations and the deplorable manner in which they were distributed. Sufferings of mind and body conspired to sow the seeds of revolt. So wounded pride and empty stomachs betook themselves to the clubs, which thus became the hot-beds of discontent. It is not surprising that with such elements at their disposal the ambitious leaders of the advanced party should have sought to coerce and even to overthrow the Government. A first opportunity for decided action was offered them by the arrival, on October 2, of the news that Strasburg and Toul had been compelled to capitulate. Three days later some five or six thousand National Guards of Belleville, led by citizen Flourens, who aspired to become Governor-General of Paris and Commander-in-Chief, made their appearance on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, to press upon the Government such demands as the immediate

abandonment of what was termed the military tactics of the Empire—viz., the constant opposition of one Frenchman to three Prussians—for the *levée en masse* of the entire nation, coupled with an immediate appeal to Republican Europe; the instantaneous election of a Municipal Commune; the discharge of all suspected Government functionaries in a position to betray the Republic; and the distribution, by the medium of the proposed Municipal Commune, of all articles of subsistence existing in the city. Citizen Flourens and a deputation of officers were received by the Government, and endeavoured to impress upon them the importance of these demands. The Government replied in substance that sorties would eventually be made, with the co-operation of the National Guard when it was possible for them to fight and not to be butchered, that all of them would soon be provided with snuff-box rifles, that cannon and mitrailleuses were in course of fabrication, and that as for the municipal elections they should take place when the voting lists were ready. Flourens expressed himself dissatisfied with these explanations, declared that the Government had evaded and not answered his questions, and abruptly resigned his command of the Bataillon de Belleville. His officers and men protested, however, against his resignation; and so he subsequently sent word to General Tamisier, Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, that he withdrew it.

When the deputation had retired, the Government discussed the advisability of proceeding with the municipal elections. On the 18th of September, a decree had been issued appointing them to take place on the 28th, at the rate of four councillors for each of the twenty arrondissements of Paris; but, on the 24th,

this decree was annulled, though five days later notice was given in the *Official Journal* that the Government intended to proceed with these same elections directly the opportunity offered. The manifestation made by Major Flourens and his battalions imposed upon the Government the necessity of taking an immediate resolution. M. Jules Favre suggested a plebiscitum, to learn whether the population really desired the elections or not, and this proposal was supported by M. Emmanuel Arago. Rochefort opined that some concessions were due to Major Flourens and his adherents, though he blamed them for organizing an armed manifestation. General Trochu and M. Jules Ferry formally expressed themselves opposed to the elections. The nomination of a violent demagogue like Blanqui would, in the latter's opinion, frighten the provinces and paralyze the action of the Delegation at Tours.*

Meanwhile, the Government issued a proclamation, condemning the practice of armed manifestations; and on October 7, a memorandum, drawn up by M. Jules Simon, and adjourning the elections until after the siege, was unanimously adopted. The leaders of the Red Republican party at once replied to this communication by another manifestation—this time an unarmed one—at the Hôtel de Ville (October 8). Many thousand people assembled, including a considerable number of National Guards; and shouts of "Vive la Commune!" were raised in front of the open windows of the Hôtel de Ville, where several members of the Government were seated. The only response this

* "Summary of the Deliberations of the Government of National Defence," by M. Dréo, Secretary, in M. Chaper's Report to the National Assembly. Imprimerie Nationale, 1873.

appeal met with was the display of an armed battalion of National Guards, drawn up in line, in front of the railings of the building, behind which numerous companies of Gardes Mobiles, with fixed bayonets, were posted. Some delegates, who were eventually admitted, were told by M. Jules Ferry that the Government could not entertain their demand; and, by the time the crowd had swollen to enormous dimensions, General Trochu made his appearance on the scene, and rode unattended round three sides of the Place, assailed with cries of "La Commune! La Commune!" uttered in a menacing tone. He, however, made no response, and, on being joined by his staff, trotted off along the quays. The gates of the Hôtel de Ville were closed, and the "rappel" beaten, which brought other armed National Guards on the scene, prepared to support the Government in their decision. General Tamisier rode from group to group, and harangued the more violent among the crowd; but all to no purpose. They demanded, and would have, the Commune of Paris; and it was only on the Place being completely occupied by National Guards friendly to the Provisional Government, and hostile to the election of the Commune, that the agitators became quiet.

At this moment, the members of the Government of National Defence appeared on the Place, and passed a review of their partisans. The warm reception they met with from these citizen soldiers, as well as from nearly all the people massed around the three sides of the Place, furnished a convincing proof that the demagogic manifestation was disapproved of by the vast majority of the Parisians. Loud acclamations arose on all sides, and were prolonged until the Government retired in front of the entrance of the Hôtel de Ville,

where M. Jules Favre made an eloquent speech to the officers of the National Guard, congratulating them on the attitude of their corps, and the union that was shown to prevail, and urging them, moreover, not to harbour any feelings of animosity in reference to what had transpired that day. A heavy fall of rain eventually dispersed the assemblage, and, as the *Rappel* related, "the Place of the Hôtel de Ville became a cake of mud. Umbrellas were put up, the National Guards put on their great-coats, and the crowd dispersed. The battalions then re-formed in column, and withdrew at the double. Both manifestation and counter-manifestation beat a retreat, and there was a universal *sauve-qui-peut*; so that by half-past five the Government remained undisputed masters of the field of battle."

With the exception of Chef-de-bataillon Sapia, who was accused of urging the men under his command to storm the Hôtel de Ville, but who was subsequently acquitted by a Council of War, none of the promoters of this attempt at intimidation were prosecuted by the Government; but, two days later, M. de Kératry (Prefect of Police)—who, but a fortnight previously, had proposed the abolition of the institution he directed on account of its "uselessness"—came in hot haste to the Government Council, and acquainted it with the awful fact that a meeting of discontented commanders of the National Guard, presided over by citizens Blanqui and Flourens, had signed a resolution proclaiming the Commune and martial law. He demanded permission to arrest Blanqui, Flourens, and likewise Millière. General Trochu seconded this proposition, to which Rochefort and M. Etienne Arago were opposed. All the other members

of the Government voted, however, in favour of having Flourens and Blanqui arrested; but these agitators were guarded by their partisans, and the decision of the authorities could not be carried out.*

For a while there were no more manifestations in front of the Hôtel de Ville; but agitation remained rife in the clubs, and was fostered by the advanced organs of the Press. The commanders of the National Guards of La Chapelle and La Villette declared that they would not let their men be butchered, but would argue with the Government the utility of all military measures in which their battalions might be concerned. On the 23rd of October the first sortie of National Guards took place, the men engaged coming from Montmartre. They surprised a Prussian post at Launay, and skirmished with the enemy at Villemomble, the result being that five of them were wounded. Patriotism had, however, momentarily abandoned its appeal for sorties, and clamoured for "cannons, more cannons, and still more cannons." The Government had already announced that it had ordered of private factories no fewer than 227 mitrailleuses with 312,000 cartridges, 50 mortars, 400 carriages for siege guns, half a million shells of various sizes, 5,000 bombs, several large naval guns, and 300 breechloading cannon, with a bore of seven centimètres, and carrying 8,600 yards. Still, merely a fraction of these were as yet delivered; and public subscriptions were organized for the casting of 1,500 cannon of large calibre. Various public bodies and private establishments contributed large sums towards this object, and in different parts of Paris open-air

* M. Dréo's "Summary of the Government Deliberations."

stalls, decorated with flags, presided over by municipal delegates and protected by National Guards, were set up for the receipt of subscriptions, which were made not merely in money, but in articles of jewellery and such like objects, all of which were exposed to the gaze of passers-by. General Trochu complained somewhat bitterly of this cannon fever, exclaiming he did not want guns but gunners; whereupon M. Garnier-Pagès rejoined that he considered the casting of cannon to be an excellent measure, as it, at least, inspired the population with hope and confidence.*

V. AMAZONS TO THE RESCUE !

The various manifestations which characterized the siege of Paris were far from being confined to the sterner sex; for, as at previous periods when a Republican form of Government exercised sway, women hastened to vindicate their rights, advance their claims, and demanded to be heard. The war, moreover, had furnished them with extra opportunities for asserting themselves, which they were by no means disposed to let slip. At the beginning of October a deputation of 200 women, preceded by drummers of the National Guard, and carrying in their midst the white flag with the red cross of the Geneva Convention, presented themselves at the Hôtel de Ville to demand of the Government the immediate supplanting of all male assistants attached to the various ambulances by women. Unluckily for them, Major Flourens was expected at the head of his armed battalions from Belleville, to press some new demand of his own

* M. Dréo's "Summary of the Government Deliberations."

upon the Government, and the iron gates of the Hôtel de Ville being closed in anticipation of his visit, the *citoyennes*, in spite of all their powers of persuasion, were unable to obtain an entrance. After waiting for some considerable time they retired, announcing their return for the next day, "accompanied," said they, to inspire terror in the Government, "by some armed National Guards." Accordingly, on the day following they again presented themselves, but without the armed escort, and were very politely received by citizen Rochefort, who promised to submit their demand to the Council of Ministers that evening.

A few days later one learnt that the authorities had declared themselves ready to grant the application, but it would not seem to have been carried at all generally into effect, owing to the indifference of the applicants, who had merely made the demand with the view of inserting the thin edge of the wedge. Their pretensions were of a far more serious character, for they not merely aspired to the enjoyment of full political privileges, but also claimed the right of forming a corps of Amazons and of sharing with their husbands and brothers the dangers of the battle-field. Pending the realization of these projects, they had already organized two or three clubs, notably in the Rue Pierre-Levée, where Louise Michel, the school-teacher, who was subsequently transported for participation in the Commune, officiated as high priestess; and at the Gymnase Triat, Avenue Montaigne, in the vicinity of the Champs Elysées. Here it was that, during the earlier days of the siege, all questions of interest to the fair sex, and these embraced nearly every known subject, were discussed with a violence and ardour not to be excelled by any

masculine réunion in Paris. At the Gymnase Triat, as a rule, all males, with the exception of one, were ignominiously relegated to the galleries, as mere spectators and listeners ; while the women occupied the body of the hall. The single member of the sterner sex admitted to take part in the proceedings, was a certain democratic maniac, the citizen Jules Allix by name, who officiated for a while as secretary to the club, in which capacity he contrived to monopolize the platform for hours together. His tenure of office was, however, scarcely an agreeable one, for, at a meeting specially convened on the afternoon of Sunday, October 9, with the view of discussing the formation of an armed legion of women, citizen Allix came utterly to grief.

On this occasion the fair sex did not predominate, the male portion of the audience, who paid 2*d.* each for admission, being largely in the majority. At the expiration of about half an hour, either the galleries which had been set apart for the sterner sex, were found to be too small, or else the charms of the committee proved too much for the occupants of them ; but, however this may be, the men descended into the hall. In spite of the indignant gestures of some of the women, the cries of affright of others, the entreaties of citizen Jules Allix, the secretary, the protestations of the committee, and the bell of the *présidente*, the assembly was invaded, much after the same fashion as the Corps Législatif on the 4th of September.

Citizen Jules Allix having opened the proceedings by reading a kind of *procès verbal* which was, at the same time, a speech, and from which one in vain endeavoured to obtain an idea of the object for which the Women's Club had been formed,

the order of the day next involved the report of the various sub-committees. Several *déléguées* were absent; and, even of those who responded to the call, the majority declared there was nothing new to communicate. When the turn came of the 8th arrondissement—the one in which the Gymnase Triat, where the meeting was held, is situated—it appeared that there was no official *déléguée* for this district, citizen Jules Allix declaring that the society had not been very successful in the Elysée quarter on account of the convents. “It is impossible to obtain work here,” observed he, “unless one passes through the Ursulines of St. Roch.” “It isn’t true,” shouted an energetic voice at the end of the hall, and an indescribable tumult ensued. All the women rose; the *présidente* violently rang her bell. The interrupter advanced in the uniform of a National Guard, and proved to be no other than the Duc de Fitz-James.

He endeavoured to speak, but screams prevented him from so doing; some women rushed towards him and threatened him, others grasped his hands and thanked him. He sprang on to the platform; with one hand he overturned the long table covered with green baize, and behind it disappeared the members of the committee. Then citizen Jules Allix sprang at his throat. They fell from the top of the platform, and M. le Duc and M. le Secrétaire rolled together in the dust. Every one rushed forward; some taking one side, and some the other.

At length citizen Allix reappeared, with a pale face, soiled and ruffled clothes, and remarkably dirty hands. In a majestic manner he regained his place, and, the table being set on its feet again, he pronounced, with emotion, a few words, amounting to

this :—" We say the truth, and if that shocks any one, we will submit to these shocks by saying what is true." But the assembly was too agitated to listen ; immoderate laughter and noisy reflections were heard in the galleries. Eventually a young lady, a member of the bureau, rose and addressed one of the principal mockers in much the same tone as Mirabeau must have addressed the Marquis de Brézé on a memorable occasion. " Citizen," she exclaimed, " if you venture to say another word, we will throw your four sous in your face and show you the door." This terrible threat sufficed to re-establish order.

The reading of the documents which were to be sent to the Government now commenced. Two ideas seemed dominant in them. The first, that women ought to be armed and take their place on the ramparts ; the second, that they should protect their honour from the assaults of the enemy by means of prussic acid, " which we have found a way of using without danger." In one of the documents there occurred this phrase—" You have seen in me, Citizen Mayor, a peaceful and simple woman ; to-day what do I wish for ? A pair of loose Zouave's trousers."

Prussic acid ! Citizen Allix, with a cunning smile, remarked how curious it was that prussic acid should serve to kill the Prussians with. Then he commenced to describe an apparatus, by means of which it would be easy to destroy all the Prussians who might enter Paris. The inventor had styled this apparatus " the finger of God," but citizen Allix thought it would be better to call it the prussic finger. " It consists of a little indiarubber thimble, such as women place on their fingers, and at the end of it is a small sharp tube containing prussic acid.

The Prussian approaches; you hold out your hand; you prick him, he falls dead. If several Prussians approach—in which case women, generally, only escape their power mad or dead—she who has the prussic finger pricks them one by one, and remains tranquil and pure, having round her a circle of corpses.” At this recital the women, alas! were moved to tears, and applauded most energetically; while the male portion of the audience no longer laughed, but roared.

The question of the uniform of the armed legion of women now came on for discussion. On the table were exhibited some drawings and a hygienic belt, which objects were about to be discussed, when a voice called out, “The secretary ought to be a woman.” The fact is, every one was tired of hearing, at the women’s club, nothing but the voice of citizen Jules Allix. On this cry the hubbub recommenced. The members of the committee grew more agitated than ever, the *présidente’s* bell rang incessantly; but all in vain. For the space of half an hour one had to submit to a noise which would have deafened an artilleryman.

Citizen Jules Allix was the object of endless ridicule. “He doesn’t belong to the National Guard!” “He never leaves the petticoats!” “He’s a Turk!” “He’s a Mormon!” were the cries. He then defied his accusers to meet him face to face. On this challenge a National Guard mounted the platform, and in a short and neat speech declared that citizen Allix had never once been on guard at the ramparts; that two days before, in a public meeting, he had almost killed an orator who was hostile to him, and only escaped the effects of public indignation by flight; and that it was

he who, in 1848, pretended to replace the telegraph by "sympathetic snails." But the speaker was not allowed to finish; the Amazons rose up tumultuously to defend their knight; they wildly harangued the orator, tore at his clothes, and ended by dragging him from the platform. One of them positively pinched his calves. The men hastened to his assistance, and he was then carried in triumph round the gymnasium, amid cries of "*à bas Allix!*" Dinner time was coming on; no one thought any longer of the uniform of the armed legion, nor of the hygienic belt, and darkness invading the hall put an end to this burlesque scene.

A few days later the landlord of the gymnasium turned his noisy tenants out of doors; and, indeed, after such an exhibition one might have thought that even the project of forming a feminine legion would have been abandoned. Amongst its warmest partisans, however, was a certain M. Félix Belly, who, strange to say, had been an object of much ridicule a few years previously, through his efforts to start a Panama Canal Company. *Tempora mutantur*. On the very morrow of the tumultuous meeting at the Gymnase Triat, he placarded the walls of Paris with green broadsides, each of which, owing to its heading in bold type, "Amazons of the Seine," attracted a curious crowd around it. The chief passages of this document ran as follows:—

"In accordance with the wishes expressed in numerous letters, and out of regard to the generous dispositions of a considerable portion of the female population of Paris, there will be formed, as resources are furnished for their equipment and organization, ten battalions of women, without distinction of social rank, and who will take the title of 'Amazons of the Seine.' These battalions are principally destined to defend the ramparts and barricades,

jointly with the stationary National Guard, and to render to the combatants, in whose ranks it is proposed they should be distributed by companies, all such domestic and fraternal services as are compatible with moral order and military discipline. They will also charge themselves with rendering, on the ramparts, the first necessary cares to the wounded, who will thus be spared having to wait for several hours. They will be armed with light guns, carrying upwards of 200 yards, and the Government will be petitioned to accord them the same daily indemnity of a franc and a half which is given to the National Guard. The costume of the 'Amazons of the Seine' will consist of a pair of black trousers, with an orange colour stripe, a blouse of woollen stuff, with a cape, and a black kepi with an orange band, together with a cartridge-box, fastening to a shoulder belt.

"An enlistment bureau is opened at 36, Rue Turbigo, from 9 in the morning till 5 P.M., for the formation of the 1st battalion, under the direction of a retired superior officer. All candidates presenting themselves for enrolment must be accompanied by a National Guard, by way of guarantee. The battalion will consist of eight companies, each composed of 150 Amazons, and forming a total of 1,200 strong. Each company will be immediately drilled and instructed in the management of firearms, and in military marching.

"An experienced doctor—of the female sex when practicable—will be attached to each battalion. That of the first battalion will recruit her needful staff, and a special ambulance will be provided for wounded Amazons, under the direction of the Chief of the Medical Service—M. le Dr. Coudret. A committee of ladies, which will act as the *conseil de famille* of the corps, will see to its healthful condition, to the proper organization of the ambulance, and to providing against the inclemencies of the weather.

"M.M. the gunsmiths are invited to present, at the office, specimens of arms they could undertake to furnish, the examination of which will be confided to officers of artillery."

The placard embodied, moreover, an appeal to the ladies of the richer classes, asking them to contribute to their sisters' equipment by subscribing money, or, in default thereof, by sacrificing some of their superfluous bracelets, necklaces, and other jewels; and beneath the glowing peroration were appended the

words "The Provisional Commander of the 1st Battalion, Félix Belly."

On proceeding to the offices in the Rue Turbigo, one found in front of them a considerable crowd of women and National Guards engaged in reading various notices posted up on either side of the doorway, or in discussing some question relative to the new corps. Several women were evidently urging each other to enrol themselves, and one aspiring Amazon was engaged in a lively discussion with a National Guard on the relative measure of valour pertaining to what we conventionally term the sterner and the weaker sexes. The staircase was completely thronged with applicants and their escorts, and one observed that by far the great majority of Amazons presenting themselves for enrolment, were women of a certain age, and evidently accustomed to hard work, often muscular, and not unfrequently over-stout. They appeared principally to consist of *femmes du peuple*, cooks, washerwomen, and such like, with a fair sprinkling of shopwomen and seamstresses, the youngest among them being not less than five-and-twenty. Galantry ought, perhaps, to impose silence upon one on the score of their pretensions to beauty; still, truth claims the admission that none of these patriotic *citoyennes* were in the smallest degree handsome or even interesting, and evidently none were *patriotes* of the Charlotte Corday type. The *chef provisoire* of the First Battalion, who inspected and cross-questioned all applicants presenting themselves, was what the French style a *petit bonhomme sec*, a wiry little middle-aged man, of military bearing, and decorated with a parti-coloured ribbon. He stated that the committee of ladies was not yet complete, as they were waiting for some in-

fluent names; that only women of unexceptional moral character would be permitted to join the corps of Amazons of the Seine, all who offered themselves for enrolment having not only to be accompanied by husband, father, or brother, but to bring with them a certificate from a Commissary of Police, attesting their character, position, &c. The officers, he said, would all be ladies, mostly wives and daughters of officers in the army, or at any rate possessing some knowledge of military affairs. In conclusion, he observed that a special patriotic and most spirit-stirring song had been composed for the corps, and entitled, "The Marseillaise of the Amazons of the Seine."

All these fine projects and preparations were, however, doomed to speedy death, for only three days afterwards, the police intervened, firstly, on the grounds, that General Trochu had interdicted the formation of further free corps, and secondly, because it had been rumoured that M. Belly made all applicants for admission into the ranks of the Amazons contribute an entrance fee. Despite the indignant protestations and denials of the Provisional Commander of the First Battalion a perquisition was made at the offices in the Rue Turbigo, and all his papers were carried off. He was not troubled, however, any further in the matter, so it is probable that the charges brought against him were incorrect. At all events, the project of the Amazons had been nipped in the bud, or, as M. Belly preferred to remark in the elaborate *Mémoire Justificatif* which he subsequently issued, "it had sunk in the mud of rascality."

VI. JEREMIADS, JOURNALISM, JESTS, AND SATIRE.

"Men are governed by words," remarked a great French philosopher; and this axiom was a favourite one with the members of the new *régime*, whose adversaries continually demanded "Des Actes et non des Paroles!" In the provinces, Gambetta certainly supplemented his stirring but mendacious proclamations with strenuous endeavours to arrest the progress of the invasion; but in Paris matters were very different; for although the words flowed fast enough, the acts so loudly clamoured for were almost entirely wanting. Even the President of the Government, General Trochu,—a skilful organizer but no strategist, and still less an able commander on the actual field of battle—evinced at all times a marked partiality for rhetoric; and he was as proud of his speeches and proclamations as if they had been so many victories. His coadjutors being mostly barristers, their loquacity can scarcely be wondered at; still, having chosen to assume the terrible responsibility of ruling and defending France, it is to be deplored that they did not gratify their confiding fellow-countrymen with more action and less verbosity. Scarcely a day, hardly an hour, but proclamations, full of "sound and fury, signifying nothing," were issued; and as if the multitudinous utterances of the Government did not suffice to stimulate public confidence and patriotic fervour, oracles arose on all sides eager to be heard, to castigate the victorious Germans with eloquent diatribes; to oppose, as they said, right against might—forgetting that France had clamoured "à Berlin!"—and to assure their fellow-countrymen and attentive Europe that victory would yet salute the flag which had travelled

round the world. There were also those who dwelt on the possible destruction of Paris as an irreparable disaster for mankind, oblivious that humanity had progressed and prospered despite the fall of Athens, Rome, and Byzantium; whilst others, again, loaded the Empire with invective, and a few called on France to say her *meá culpá*. There were, moreover, censors among these oracles, who bitterly denounced the inaction of the Government—in which they were generally right—and who could perceive no chance of salvation save in the Commune—in which they were invariably wrong. There was, indeed, a multitude of councillors of every category, but the wisdom which fell from their lips was truly infinitesimal.

M. Victor Hugo, who had remained in exile during eighteen years—simply because he could not “breathe the air of Paris whilst it was tainted by the breath of the Bonapartes”—was a prominent contributor to these oracular utterances. In his appeal to Germany, issued shortly after his return to France*—an appeal indited with a fiery eloquence, *sui generis*, and a power of language he alone possesses—he asked his brethren of the Fatherland if they were anxious to emulate Attila, Alaric and Omar; to conduct themselves like Vandals, Huns, and Turks; and warned them that if Paris were pushed to extremities, she could and would conquer. Even if ruined materially, the dispersion of her stones would foster the dispersion of ideas, and from every grain of her ashes would spring the seed of the future. “Germans!” exclaimed the excited poet, “If you persist, let it be so; you are warned; come and attack the walls of Paris. Under

* *Ante*, vol. i. p. 34.

your bombs and your mitrailleuses she will defend herself. As for me—an old man now—I shall be there unarmed. It behoves me to be with the people who die. I pity you for being with the kings who kill!" This appeal having failed to turn the Germans from their purpose, M. Hugo next considered it his duty to exhort his countrymen to resistance; and accordingly, shortly after the investment of Paris was completed, he dedicated to the French nation a second and most sensational address:—"Rouen," cried the poet, "draw thy sword! Lille, take up thy musket! Bordeaux, point thy cannon! Marseilles, sing thy song and be terrible!" and then, turning to the *Francs-tireurs*, especial objects of German aversion, he called upon them to wind through thickets, pass over torrents, avail themselves of darkness and gloom, glide through ravines, creep, crawl, take aim, and exterminate the invader. For the Parisians, M. Hugo reserved a special proclamation, redolent of antithesis, and from which we learnt that Berlin, the Spree, Spandau, Potsdam, and M. de Bismarck, constituted the German world. The war between France and Germany was likened to the old contest between the archangel and the dragon; and then, after regaling us at one moment with the comforting intelligence that Prussia would be cast down, and the next minute predicting that the world would be amazed when it saw how grandly Paris could die, M. Hugo concluded with the remark: "The Pantheon is already asking itself where it is to put the crowds of heroes who are about to acquire a title to the shelter of its dome. O Paris, thou hast crowned the statue of Strasburg with flowers; history will crown thee with stars!"

Following Victor Hugo's initiative, other notable

men, such as Louis Blanc and Edgar Quinet, Renan and Bishop Dupanloup, came forward and contributed to the oracular literature of the times. At the beginning of October, the first-named addressed an appeal to the English people, in which he cast all the responsibility of the war upon the fallen Empire. He asked the English to imagine a bombardment of London, and the destruction of its finest buildings and museums, and urged that Europe was endangered by Prussian militarism; observing, moreover, that a nation which sanctioned the saturnalia of force stood a chance of undergoing it; and, indeed, deserved to do so. At this epoch the only response of perfidious Albion was, apparently, the publication in London of a placard in favour of France, by a certain "Citizen Richard Congreve, Chef des Positivistes Anglais," which was described by the Parisian press as having had an immense effect, notwithstanding the Jews of the city, the aristocrats of the West End, and the princes of Windsor. Edgar Quinet's most important address was an appeal to the Government to decree the *levée en masse*, and to organize an energetic resistance to the enemy. Renan distinguished himself by an eloquent letter to Dr. Strauss, contesting the right of Germany to wrest Alsace from France, and reminding him that if conquerors sat in the Walhalla, yet nowhere in the New Testament are military virtues mentioned among those which gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Bishop Dupanloup's letter on the situation was full of dignity and sorrow. "We are passing," he said, "through a period of justice and expiation. Better the hour of chastisement than the hour of scandal."

Some of the many manifestoes which appeared, notably those of Victor Hugo and Louis Blanc, were

placarded on the walls of Paris, and they were all of them reproduced in the newspapers. There had been some considerable modifications in Parisian journalism since the Revolution. Several of the daily papers, such as the *Volontaire*, *L'Histoire*, the *Public* and the *Parlement*, had ceased altogether to appear. Others were merely issued in the provinces, though editions of some of the more important organs were published both in Paris and at Tours. A multitude of new journals had also sprung up,* foremost among them being the *Combat*, edited by Felix Pyat, the *Patrie en Danger*, managed by Blanqui, and the *Verité*, directed by Edouard Portalis.† The publication of these new organs was greatly facilitated by the abolition both of the stamp duty and of the pecuniary deposit which the Empire had exacted by way of security for Press offences; but even before the investment was completed, a new, unforeseen difficulty arose seriously threatening the existence of every periodical in Paris. All the French paper manufactories being

* The total number of new journals issued in Paris from the 4th of September till the end of the year was forty-eight. One of them—the *République*—was issued for the first time a few hours after the Revolution was effected. Another one—*Les Nouvelles*—was published four times a day. Twenty-two others were issued as daily, six as bi-weekly, and three as weekly periodicals; one of the latter being an illustrated journal. Four of the bi-weekly organs were published purely for despatch by balloon into the provinces and abroad, combining a blank half-sheet of note-paper, for correspondence, with a half-sheet of lithographed matter detailing recent events in Paris. By the end of the year, twenty-four of the new organs had ceased to appear, many of them having only issued one or two numbers. Of the remaining four-and-twenty, several only made an occasional appearance.

† The *Réveil*—edited by Delescluze, and a prominent Radical organ during the siege—already existed prior to the Revolution.

in the northern provinces occupied by the Germans, the only supplies the Parisian Press could count upon consisted of such stocks as might exist in the capital. The scarcity of paper led to a reduction in the size of the different journals, many of which henceforward consisted of a single leaf. The venerable *Galvani's Messenger* was published in this diminished form for a few days, and then ceased to appear altogether, all its compositors having left Paris in fear of the expected siege.

It was curious to note how several prominent organs of public opinion modified their politics directly the Second Empire was overthrown. For instance, the versatile *Figaro* affected for a time to become a staunch Republican journal, though it did not abate one iota of its unblushing mendacity. Prior to the siege, it had revelled in abusing and ridiculing the Germans—in which respect it was not alone, for even the sager *Liberté* publicly thanked Providence for the fact that the King of Prussia had gone mad. The *Figaro's* earlier effusions—notably Albert Millaud's famous diatribe, "The Wolves"—were perfect disgraces to journalism, and its later rhodomontades proved scarcely less deserving of censure. Abuse not sufficing, however, it took to fabricating news from outside, furnishing, for instance, a detailed account of what passed at a council of war held at Versailles when it was proposed to abandon the investment of Paris. The writer even assured us that King William thumped the table with clenched fist when a retreat was proposed, and that Bismarck strode impatiently up and down the room. Then, also, the *Figaro* gave us news of the French provincial forces, equally sensational and inaccurate, and it was publicly pilloried one morning in the

Officiel for its mendacious assertions. In these, again, it was not alone, for one found the *Soir* stating that the Prussians used the Versailles picture galleries as kitchens; whilst the *Gaulois* affirmed that a number of Prussian officers and soldiers had dishonoured their uniforms and outraged 300 women. Turning to home affairs, one found journals of acknowledged respectability supporting the most senseless proposals: for instance, the ultra-legitimist *Gazette de France* openly approved of Gustave Courbet's subsequently realized proposal to overthrow the Vendôme column.

Neither sense nor moderation were to be expected from the Red Republican organs. In the *Combat*, King William, General Trochu, and the Prefecture of Police were the especial objects of M. Pyat's virulence. He even started a subscription for a rifle of honour to be given to the man who shot the King of Prussia. This weapon, he assured us, would become more famous than David's spear, Tell's bow, Joan of Arc's sword, or the bullet with which poor Maximilian was sent to an untimely grave. It was to be called the "Pacifcator," and upon the barrel was to be engraved the inscription, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity!" Strange to relate, six thousand citizens were found eager to subscribe for the fabrication of this *fusil d'honneur*, which quite cast into the shade the company projected to seize the person of Count Bismarck either dead or alive, with the privilege, if the latter were accomplished, of exhibiting the German Chancellor in an iron cage! Delescluze's journal, the *Réveil*, was not a whit less violent than the *Combat*, though it was perhaps a trifle more boastful. We were told one morning in October that in a few days the French Republic would dictate terms of peace,

the first clause in which would affirm that royalty was abolished in Europe. Citizen Delescluze was in this instance unusually modest, for there was no reason in the world for him to leave the Shah of Persia, the Emperor of China, the Bey of Tunis, and the Sultan of Morocco on their thrones. Why not rid the entire world of monarchical institutions at one fell swoop? The *bête noire* of Blanqui's organ, *La Patrie en Danger*, was the clergy. He demanded that all the churches should be transformed into granaries or clubs, and suggested that the priests should be driven out of the ambulances, arrested, armed, and placed under fire in the most perilous positions. At the same time, like Pyat, Delescluze, and others, this old revolutionary maniac clamoured with all his remaining lungs for the immediate election of the Commune, which, in his eyes, would alone save France; as though there were any more chance of the enemy being beaten by a demagogic municipality than there was of his being conquered by the strains of the Marseillaise.

Although the "liberal-minded" Ernest Picard proposed the suppression of all newspapers during the siege,* the Government did not, in the earlier times, adopt any special measures to curb the licence of the Press. On the contrary, the official decrees were imbued with the most liberal spirit; though, on one unfortunate occasion, the Government certainly acted in defiance of all law. This was when M. E. Portalis, editor of the *Vérité*, was arrested on the charge of propagating false news; whereas he only asked the Government if certain rumoured intelligence was correct.† He was kept in prison for over a week

* M. Dréo's "Summary," Oct 17. † *Ante*, vol. i. p. 266.

being released when the judicial authorities were satisfied that he could not be convicted. Apropos of the legal officials, one must record that the Parisian Press was unanimous in crying "Bon débarras" over the grave of M. Delesvaux, Judge of the Sixth Civil Court, who, under the Empire, had been specially selected to try Press and political offences. The secret papers found at the Tuileries after the Revolution, and the publication of which enabled the newspapers to fill many a gaping column during the siege, disclosed the fact that for every political prisoner or journalist brought before this ornament to the Bench—and he never had the weakness to acquit one—he received a sum of money proportioned to the number of months' imprisonment, and the amount of fines inflicted, and the political and social standing of the prisoner. When this became known, Delesvaux put a pistol to his head and committed suicide. He was not the only judicial functionary who came to grief during the siege. In consequence of the scandalous conduct of M. Devienne, President of the Cour de Cassation,* the Government issued a decree ordering him to be judged by his own court—a measure which eventually led to his dismissal from the Bench. The houses of other Imperialist Judges were searched by the police, and numerous compromising documents were discovered.

In the gloomiest moments of the siege of Paris, the *mot pour rire* was never lost sight of; for there was at all times, and respecting all things, a superabundance of jests; jests on any given subject—the Prussians, the National Guard, the sorties, the rations, the gas, and

* See *ante*, vol. i. p 165.

thus *ad infinitum*. A German general was said to have remarked—"I don't know how to satisfy the army; the soldiers complain of hunger, and yet I lead them every morning to the slaughter-house;" while, as regards the French troops, one learnt that a colonel, who had been ordered to have the words "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," painted on the walls of his barracks, preferred to replace the Republican motto with the inscription "Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery," in which device he declared he placed infinitely more trust. The treason mania was happily hit off in the anecdote of the soldier who remarked to a comrade: "The captain is a traitor." "Poph!" ejaculated his companion. "Yes, I am certain of it," was the retort; "have you not noticed that every time he orders us to march forward, we meet the enemy?" When General Trochu issued his decree, incorporating in the marching battalions all National Guards under forty-five years of age,* a Guard, who was asked how old he was, replied, "Forty-six." "How is that?" he was asked; "only a few weeks ago you told everyone that you were but thirty-six." "That's true!" rejoined the unabashed citizen-soldier; "but what with rampart duty, manifesting at the Hôtel de Ville, &c., I am quite ten years older than I was!" On *viande de*

* November 9th.—These marching battalions were to be formed of war companies, drafted from the sedentary battalions; each company to comprise 100 men, if the sedentary battalion was 1200 strong or under, and 125 men if its strength was above 1200. In constituting these companies, volunteers were first of all to be chosen. Then bachelors, or widowers without children, between 20 and 35 years of age; 3rdly, the same between 35 and 45 years of age; 4thly, married men, or fathers of families, from 20 to 35 years old; and 5thly, the same, from 35 to 45 years old.

cheval coming into vogue, we were informed that citizen X. looked ill one evening after dinner, and that when his wife tenderly inquired what was the matter with him, he replied, "Oh! I shall soon be all right, but I always thought myself a better *horse-man*." Again, when the supply of gas began to fail, we learnt that Rochefort was positively delighted with the prospect; for, with no gas, the Parisians would inevitably be obliged to purchase some thousands of *Lanternes*. As for the citizen who desired to create a sensation in these strange times, all he had to do, remarked the *Figaro*, was to enter a café, and call for a railway time-table.

All the personages and topics of the hour were depicted in the caricatures appearing in such of the comic papers as still subsisted; and some very droll designs were published in the *Charivari*, in which Cham revenged himself on perfidious Albion for her indifference, by portraying King William as Davy Crockett with the British Lion licking his boots. In another number of the same periodical Daumier represented Count von Bismarck asleep. In his dream he perceived a phantom, supposed to be Death, who, as he stood scythe in hand looking towards a corpse-strewn battle-field, murmured in the Chancellor's ear, "Thanks, many thanks." In the *Journal Amusant* one found depicted a huge mousetrap with "France" inscribed above the raised doorway. A regiment of mice dressed as Prussian soldiers were marching towards it, the leader—a pompous, pot-bellied fellow—pointing with his sword to the cheese labelled "Paris," which was inside the trap. Beneath ran the suggestive inscription, "If we could only catch them all in it." But the caricatures published



BUTCHER WILLIAM.



KING WILLIAM BIDS DEATH MARCH ON.



"FIRST CATCH YOUR RABBIT!"



HUNGER AND PRUDENCE.

ii. 69.

in the comic journals were only a fraction of those which appeared. Scores and scores were issued separately at a penny each, being displayed at the kiosques on the boulevards, or being strung, like clothes, on a line running from tree to tree. Many of them were decidedly offensive to public decency, but the authorities never thought of interfering. King William, Bismarck, and the ex-Emperor, whom the populace familiarly termed "Badinguet," furnished subjects for most of these designs. One effort depicted Badinguet and William as Robert Macquaire and Bertrand; whilst another represented Badinguet eating an eagle. "Rascal," said the King of Prussia, "what are you doing with your eagle?" "Eating it," replied the fallen Cæsar, "what else can I do with it?" Elsewhere one found M. Thiers with one foot in the grave, pointing a cannon on the fortifications — *the* fortifications with which *he* had provided Paris; and in another design Bismarck, in seven-league boots, made ineffectual efforts to step from Versailles to Paris. The King of Prussia also found himself portrayed as "Butcher William;" or else he was shown us in the act of bidding Death — faint from previous exploits — to still march on. The scarcity of provisions prompted several designs. In one we found a cook prowling on a house roof and seeking to catch a luckless cat, wherewith to prepare a succulent *lapin sauté*. Another caricature represented the armies of succour seeking to pass a leg of mutton, some ribs of beef, and several strings of sausages over a double row of spiked helmets surrounding a bastion labelled "Paris." From this latter a hungry National Guard was about to spring forward, eager to partake of the joints he had in

view, but an arm—that of General Trochu—held him back, condemning him to inaction and famine.

The booksellers had rather a hard time of it during the siege. The only new works issued consisted of a few pamphlets on the situation, and the Government edition of the secret papers found at the Tuileries—documents which placed the corrupt and pampered Court of the Second Empire in its true light. The trade was also able to fall back upon the various publications suppressed, or placed under interdict, in France during Imperial times, such as Victor Hugo's *Châtiments*, which had a very large sale, a first edition of 5000 copies being bought up on the day of publication. Military manuals were also in great demand. For instance, there were sold in France during the war—and a very large proportion of these sales must have been in Paris and during the siege—no fewer than 840,000 copies of the *École du Soldat*, 170,000 of the *École du Bataillon*, and 450,000 of the *Service des Places*, besides hundreds of thousands of cheap abridgments of various kinds.

VIII.

EVENTS OF ILL OMEN.

I. BAZAINE'S TREASON AND THE BOURGET BLUNDER.

IN the preceding pages we have endeavoured to picture the aspect and condition of Paris during the earlier weeks of the investment—with citizen soldiers completing their military education inside the city, and regular troops reconnoitring and skirmishing in the environs; with oracles predicting the fall of the Teuton, or inciting the population to deeds of valour, and would-be Amazons clamouring to share the common peril; with the spy and signal manias in full force, and *queues* of famished creatures already at this early period besieging the butchers' shops for their daily rations; with caricatures flaunting from the kiosques on the Boulevards, and the national *esprit* asserting itself in a thousand humorous sallies; with dissension brewing at the clubs, and malcontents manifesting at the Hôtel de Ville; whilst the Government went on proclaiming and perorating, and the Press continued to foster all the popular illusions. We now come to those events of ill omen which marked the last days of October, and seemed to foreshadow the possible correctness of Count Bismarck's sardonic prediction, that Paris would stew in its own gravy.

On the 25th of October, the Parisians learnt with deep emotion, that the enemy had captured Château-

dun, an open town of Eure-et-Loire, after a terrible bombardment, which set half the houses on fire, and after a hand-to-hand struggle in the streets, and the massacre of the local National Guards and the Francs-tireurs de Paris. This valiant resistance offered to the foe, constituted, during forty-eight hours, the leading topic of conversation, and the hopes of patriotism revived at the thought that if France were full of citizens such as these, she might yet annihilate the hitherto victorious invader. But on the morning of the 27th, a great disaster was made known to the Parisians, by the Red Republican journal, the *Combat*, which appeared with the following announcement, surrounded with a mourning border, on its first page:—"It is a fact, sure and certain, that the Government of National Defence retains in its possession a State secret, which we denounce to an indignant country as a high treason. Marshal Bazaine has sent a colonel to the camp of the King of Prussia to treat for the surrender of Metz, and for Peace, in the name of His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon III."

Intense excitement was caused in Paris by this statement, which was, however, generally disbelieved. Metz was the key of the situation. Marshal Bazaine's surrender would not merely deliver the finest of French fortresses to the enemy, but would release the army of Prince Frederick Charles, and permit it to march upon Paris, just when General d'Aurelle de Paladines was expected to overwhelm Von der Tann, and hurry with the army of the Loire to the relief of the capital. Such a terrible misfortune, argued the Parisians, could not be true. The last official news from Metz was to the effect that General Bourbaki had escaped, and that he had placed his sword at the service of the

Republic. Surely Marshal Bazaine was as good a patriot as the ex-Commander of the ex-Imperial Guard, and it was a calumny to suppose that he could have betrayed his country with the view of restoring the Empire! Several individuals who hurried off to the offices of the *Combat*, with the view of ascertaining the truth, found the editor, citizen Félix Pyat, absent. Warned of their approach, he had just been able to escape by a back way. As the remaining members of the staff merely furnished some very vague information concerning the paternity of the obnoxious announcement, they were forthwith arrested and conducted to the Hôtel de Ville. Here their captors were received by MM. Ferry and Rochefort, both of whom emphatically denied that Metz had fallen, the latter, moreover, declaring in unmistakable terms the contempt he felt for citizen Pyat, "a mean coward of the most sneaking class, who took part in Victor Noir's funeral by hiding behind a venetian blind, and who afterwards hid himself for eight days from the police on board a coal barge." Meanwhile the clerks at the War Office struck work, and came and interviewed General Trochu, who, in reply to their pressing questions as to the truth of the news, bluntly stated that it was false. Excited groups gathered on the boulevards throughout the afternoon, and it was seriously proposed to attack the *Combat* office, and destroy the printing presses. This project was, however, not carried into effect, and the National Guards contented themselves with buying up and seizing all the copies of the paper they could find, and burnt them in the streets, amidst the cheers of the assembled crowd.

Citizen Félix Pyat remained in hiding, and the *Combat*

volunteered no explanation whatever of its sensational statement, in its number of the following morning, when the *Journal Officiel* formally denied that Marshal Bazaine had capitulated. Accordingly confidence once more became paramount, and the public satisfaction increased, when one learnt, the same evening, that the village of Le Bourget, lying east of St. Denis, on the high road to Soissons, had been wrested from the Prussian Guards, with small loss, by the Francs-tireurs of the Press, supported by detachments of the line and the Garde Mobile. The attack was executed under the orders of General Carré de Bellemare, who had been a member of the Council of War at Sedan, when he refused to sign the capitulation. Having managed to escape, he set out for Paris, which he reached prior to the investment, General Trochu at once appointing him Commander-in-Chief of St. Denis and the adjacent forts.

Paris went to bed wonderfully elated with this success over the Prussian arms, and fully reassured concerning Félix Pyat's so-called "Plan Bazaine." Next morning, however, the editor of the *Combat* made public the fact that the news had been communicated to him by citizen Flourens, who had it from citizen Henri Rochefort. Citizen Flourens partially confirmed this statement in a letter which the *Combat* published at the same time. He admitted that he had apprised citizen Pyat of Bazaine's treachery, and added that the news was imparted to him by a member of the Government. Still he denied that this member was Rochefort. Subsequently, however, M. Flourens thought fit to recall this latter declaration, and asserted that it was on October 26, whilst in the company of Captain de

Croëz, that Rochefort acquainted him with the fact that Bazaine had sent a general to Versailles to treat concerning the surrender of Metz, in the name of the Emperor Napoleon. Rochefort begged, at the same time, that the fact might be kept secret; but Flourens thought fit to confide the news to citizen Pyat, and the pair drew up together the announcement, the publication of which in the *Combat* caused such consternation in Paris. According to Flourens, the Government deliberately lied in denying the truth of this announcement, for it was already in full possession of all the facts; and in support of this assertion, he mentioned that the secret was not merely divulged by Rochefort to him, but that it was also communicated by M. Eugène Pelletan to Commandant Longuet, of the National Guard.* Flourens also added, that in writing to Pyat that Rochefort was not his informant, his only object was to secure a friend from the vengeance of jealous colleagues.

There is a certain plausibility in M. Flourens' statement; and, although the precise circumstances of Marshal Bazaine's treason were not known to the Government until the 30th of October, when M. Thiers, provided with a *laisser passer* from Count Bismarck, arrived in Paris to discuss the question of an armistice, yet such intelligence as the authorities possessed by no means warranted the absolute denial with which they met citizen Pyat's thunderbolt. Thus, in a despatch which was received from Tours on the 24th, and which mainly referred to M. Thiers' diplomatic mission, certain apprehensions were expressed concerning the attitude of Marshal Bazaine;

* "Paris Livré," by Gustave Flourens. Part 3, pp. 120-124.

nominally supported by Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Italy; and that he had already conferred with the Government at the Foreign Office. It had been vaguely mentioned that he had returned from his diplomatic mission and was at Tours, and also that there was a possibility of his coming to Paris; but that he was actually within the walls nobody even dreamt. No mention of the fact was made, moreover, in the boastful harangue which M. Jules Favre had addressed that same afternoon to a deputation of refugee mayors at the Hôtel de Ville; but when the citizens awoke on the morrow, they found the walls of Paris placarded with the announcement of M. Thiers' arrival, and of the projected suspension of hostilities; whilst, by the side of this communication, there at length appeared an official acknowledgment of the disaster of Metz; and, although the Government studiously ignored therein all rumours of Marshal Bazaine's treachery, yet the fact remained that he had surrendered to Germany the finest fortress in France, and the flower of the French army. Metz, as the Parisians subsequently learnt, had capitulated on the 27th of October—the very day when Félix Pyat's pretended libel appeared in the columns of the *Combat*.

II. THE GOVERNMENT IN PERIL.

A hurricane of indignation swept over Paris that Monday morning as the citizens recapitulated the tidings of the last few hours—Le Bourget lost; Metz surrendered; proposals for an armistice with the hated invader being entertained! The same query—"Could it be that Trochu's plan and Bazaine's plan were

synonymous"—circulated throughout the city. The same exclamation—"Treachery!"—was on every patriot's lip. So, impelled by their excited feelings—which seemed to make all ripe for revolution—National Guards of advanced opinions hurried off to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, where by mid-day an immense crowd was assembled. Deputations, composed mostly of officers of the National Guard, were constituted, and sent to interview the members of the Government; all of whom, with the exception of Henri Rochefort, were assembled in Council. The delegates were courteously informed by M. Jules Ferry that good citizens need not be afraid; that if the disasters of France were great, they were not irreparable; and that, as regards the armistice, nothing should be accomplished without the sanction of the country; whilst M. Etienne Arago, Mayor of Paris, added, in a tone of mock-heroism, that as long as he lived the Prussians should not enter the Hôtel de Ville. Meanwhile, the crowd outside was steadily increasing in numbers, and the members of the Government who attempted to harangue the swelling assemblage could not prevail upon it to retire. Numerous individuals having passed through the railing which faced the Hôtel de Ville, Colonel Chevriau, under whose command the building was placed, caused the gates to be shut; whereupon several members of the free corps known as Tibaldi's tirailleurs, perceiving a side window open, climbed up, slid in, and opened the door leading to the offices. The mob at once effected an entrance, despite the resistance of some Gardes Mobiles; and Colonel Chevriau, hurrying to the council-room, apprised the Government that the building was invaded. M. Jules

Ferry at once went out to meet the malcontents, who had already penetrated as far as the throne-room. He endeavoured to speak, but his voice was drowned by clamours for the Commune. At this moment, two shots were fired upon the place outside, and a bullet from a revolver, aimed at M. Jules Favre, who was on the balcony haranguing the crowd, broke a window of the throne room—to the infinite terror of the invaders, who shouted “To arms, our brothers are being assassinated!” General Trochu now presented himself, and endeavoured to make a speech explanatory of the capitulation of Metz, and the re-capture of Le Bourget, but he was greeted with shouts of “La Commune!” and forced to retire; whilst Henri Rochefort, who was in the building for a few minutes, scarcely met with a better reception.

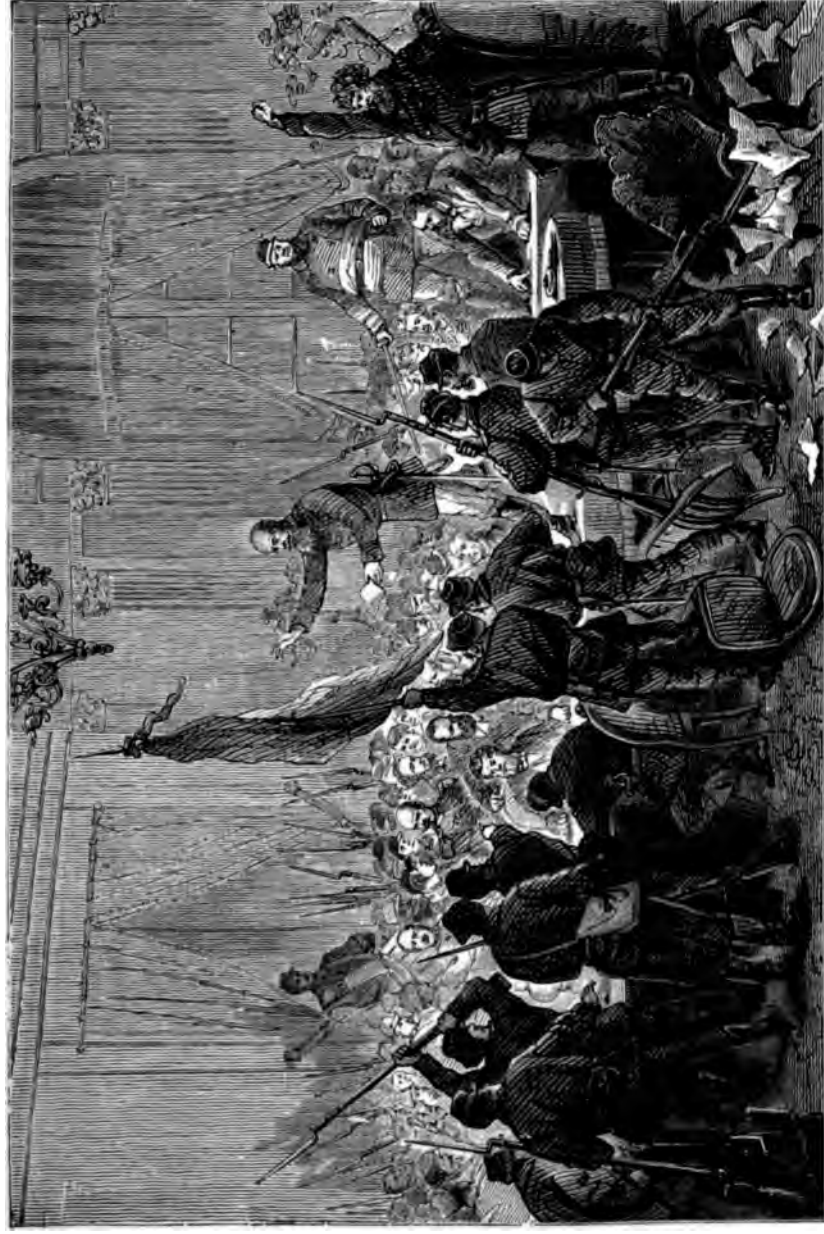
Meanwhile, the Mayors appointed by Government over the different arrondissements of Paris had been holding a meeting in an adjoining room. They expressed themselves in favour of immediate municipal elections, and M. Etienne Arago repaired to the Government council-room, and asked that this suggestion might be carried out. Hereupon, M. Ernest Picard proposed to inform the malcontents that the Government would submit itself to election by the citizens; that municipal councillors should be elected; and that no decision respecting the armistice or peace should be taken without consulting the population. The Council voted at once for announcing the municipal elections, but without any indication of date; MM. Arago, Favre, Ferry, Pelletan, and Picard being in favour of this proposition, which was opposed by MM. Trochu, Garnier-Pagès, and Jules Simon. M. Etienne Arago immediately hurried out to acquaint

the invaders with this decision, and found that they had penetrated into the municipal council-room, where the windows, tables, and desks were being smashed. He was girt round with his sash of office, which failed, however, to inspire the least respect; and after tendering his resignation to the Government, which was refused, he proceeded towards his private bureau, and was arrested on his way, and, for a time, kept a prisoner by some of the invaders.

The members of the Government were still assembled in council, discussing whether they should submit themselves to election or not. If they did so, several among them might not be reappointed; whilst if they did not, they might find themselves overthrown by the projected Commune. The debate had proceeded so far, when the tumult suddenly grew nearer and nearer; the doors of the council-room were forced open, and citizens Chassin, Cyrille, Joly, and Lefrançais, Chefs-de-Bataillon of the National Guard—who had placed themselves at the head of the movement—appeared upon the threshold. They demanded the election of the Commune, and the formation of a new Cabinet, presided by M. Dorian, the popular Minister of Public Works. M. Jules Favre protested against this violence. “Do what you like with us,” he exclaimed, “but do not hope to obtain from us anything whatsoever through fear.” Citizens Chassin and Joly protested that their motives were good, declaring that they desired to avoid the collision which threatened to take place. At this moment, General Tamisier, Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, made his appearance, announcing that the overthrow of the Government was being proclaimed on all sides, and a second later the mob poured in, shouting “Vive la

Commune!" and insulting the members of the Government. All of the latter—excepting M. Ernest Picard, who managed to glide out of the room, and make good his escape—remained at their seats round the board; the mob pressing them so closely that they could not even rise from their chairs. MM. Garnier-Pagès and Jules Favre attempted in vain to speak. Their voices were drowned by cries of "Down with them! To Mazas, to Vincennes with them!" Excited citizens jumped on the table, and began to perorate; eventually calling upon the members of the Government to resign their functions, an injunction which they one and all refused to obey.

That same morning citizen Gustave Flourens had called together the commanders of the five battalions of the Belleville National Guard, to whom he proposed an immediate attack on the Hôtel de Ville. One of these officers suggested, however, that Belleville should assure itself of the co-operation of the other faubourgs, and this was agreed to; appointments being given to thirty chefs-de-bataillon to meet and discuss the matter at the Café de la Garde Nationale, in front of the Hôtel de Ville. Flourens, however, was personally in favour of immediate action; so, mounting on horseback, he set out with his own free corps, the so-called "Tirailleurs de Belleville,"—which composed some 400 men, to each of whom he distributed a packet of six cartridges. He reached the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville at about 4 P.M., when the disorder was at its height; and, penetrating into the building with his men, he began by commanding silence among the seven or eight thousand citizens collected on the grand staircase and in the surrounding rooms, and suggested that the Commune should be nominated by



THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE IN PERIL.

acclamation. As he wrote his own name at the head of the list, which he proceeded to draw up, shouts arose that Dorian should be put down for the presidency, and, after some hesitation, Flourens obeyed. Eventually the following names were agreed upon :—Citizens Dorian, Flourens, Mottu, Victor Hugo, Louis Blanc, Delescluze, Blanqui, Avrial, Raspail, Ledru Rollin, Félix Pyat, Ranvier, and Rochefort—the last alone not meeting with unanimous favour. Scraps of paper, on which these names were inscribed, or which contained the simple mention, “The Commune is accepted,” were thrown out of the windows to the crowd collected on the Place, where the prudent shopkeepers had already put up their shutters. Meanwhile, citizen Flourens entered the council-room, and, mounting the table, where so many had preceded him, he summoned the Government to resign, but met with a categorical refusal. The uproar was deafening. Every now and then a drum was beat in hopes of obtaining a little silence, but all in vain. Threats against the Government were indulged in, and cries were even heard of “Kill Trochu !” At length it was declared that the members of the Government must be arrested, and accordingly MM. Trochu, Favre, Ferry, Simon, Garnier-Pagès, and Emmanuel Arago, together with Generals Le Flô and Tamisier, Staff-Captains Montagut and De Montaut, and MM. Lavertujon and Magnin, were placed under the combined guard of some of Flourens’ and Tibaldi’s tirailleurs and several armed National Guards.

It has been mentioned that M. Ernest Picard, Minister of Finances, had managed to escape when the council chamber was first invaded. He hastened to the

Louvre, and interviewed General Schmitz, the chief of Trochu's staff, who, however, declined to summon the troops to the assistance of the sequestered Government without a written order from his superior. M. Picard found less routine at the staff offices of the National Guard, whence orders for the rappel to be beaten throughout Paris were at once issued. M. Picard also succeeded in garrisoning the National Printing Office, prohibited the insertion in the *Journal Officiel* of any Communist decree, and sent word to the different Ministries to hold everything ready for defence. Admirals de la Roncière le Noury and de la Chaille, moreover, waited on him at the Ministry of Finance, and proffered all the assistance they could give. The beating of the rappel was at first slow in eliciting a favourable response from those National Guards who had not taken part in the attempt to overthrow the Government; but one battalion—the 106th—belonging to the Faubourg St. Germain, having learnt the position of affairs, on its way back from duty at the ramparts, at once marched on the Hôtel de Ville. By employing the stratagem of shouting “Vive la Commune !” it succeeded in entering the building. At that moment several of the invaders were busily devouring some provisions they had managed to find; whilst others, having forced open the cellars, were quietly drinking themselves drunk. The commander of the 106th battalion, M. Ibos, left a portion of his men on the ground-floor, and, with two companies, ascended the staircase and penetrated into the room where the Government were detained prisoners. He overpowered the guards; and General Trochu, who had already prudently removed his epaulettes and taken off the star he wore upon his breast, was at once enveloped

in a great-coat; an ordinary National Guard kepi was thrust upon his head, and in a few minutes he was in safety outside. MM. Jules Ferry and Emmanuel Arago also succeeded in making off; but Flourens prevented the flight of the other prisoners, who were placed in a bay window under the surveillance of National Guards, armed with loaded rifles, and having instructions to shoot the captives if they attempted to escape. At the same time the insurgents rallied, secured the person of Commandant Ibos, and drove his men from the building.

The old conspirator, Blanqui, had prudently kept away till he thought all danger was over, but hearing that the Commune had been proclaimed, he arrived at the Hôtel de Ville at about six o'clock. The density of the crowd prevented him at first from rejoining Flourens; so, installing himself in one of the rooms, he at once drew up orders for the gates of the city to be closed, for all the Red Republican battalions to hasten to the Hôtel de Ville, and for a battalion, already outside, to take immediate possession of the Prefecture of Police; whilst, at the same time, he issued instructions for the commanders of the forts to be on their guard against the Prussians who might seek to profit by the "revolution." Being attracted by the noise which the release of General Trochu occasioned, he hurried to see what was the matter, and was recognized by some men of the 17th Battalion, belonging, like the 106th, to the Faubourg St. Germain, and who had also penetrated into the building. They endeavoured to carry him off, but he was rescued by Flourens and his tirailleurs before this could be accomplished. Blanqui and Flourens, with Millièrè, who was already present, were soon joined by Ranvier.

Delescluze, and Mottu ; and, during several hours, the four first were engaged in drawing up decrees and in despatching fresh orders, summoning the Red Republican battalions to the Hôtel de Ville. Certain messengers, who were sent out to secure the Ministry of Finance and the park of artillery, situated behind Notre Dame, failed, however, in their object. A lieutenant, who presented himself at the Treasury with an order to hand over 600,000*l.*, was not paid, and the instructions despatched to the National Printing Office to insert in the *Journal Officiel*, of the next day, a decree, naming 153 members of a Provisional Municipality, and convoking them to attend on the morrow at the Hôtel de Ville, were not complied with, owing to the precautions taken by M. Ernest Picard. Still the insurgents secured several of the district Mairies, where they remained, believing themselves completely masters of the situation.

In the meantime General Trochu had proceeded to his head-quarters at the Louvre, where he informed M. Jules Ferry that he should not allow the regular army to interfere in the matter, as it was the business of the National Guard to restore order in the city. M. Ferry being anxious to release his comrades, accordingly went to the head-quarters of the National Guard in the Place Vendôme, and learnt that the rappel had been beaten some time previously, but that the citizen soldiery were slow in turning out, a great deal of doubt and hesitation prevailing as to whether they should come to the assistance of the Government which Paris had installed so triumphantly less than two months before. Eventually, however, a certain number of battalions assembled, and M. Jules Ferry and M. Edmond Adam, Prefect of Police, placed

themselves at their head, and marched on the Hôtel de Ville. General Ducrot had meanwhile arrived in Paris, and after a conference held between him, General Trochu, and M. Ernest Picard, at the Louvre, some battalions of the Garde Mobile were despatched to the assistance of the still captive members of the Government. It was now half-past eleven o'clock at night. The National Guards, led by MM. Ferry and Adam, appeared on the Place and battered at the gateways of the Hôtel de Ville with the butt ends of their muskets, but without being able to force them open. The passages inside were barricaded with the gala carriages of Baron Haussmann turned topsyturvy, and active preparations were being made for defence. The main force at the disposal of the occupants of the municipal palace consisted of Flourens' and Tibaldi's tirailleurs. One Belleville battalion, which had repaired to the scene of action during the afternoon, had left without even entering the Hôtel de Ville, and three or four other detachments of Red Republican proclivities, which had formed on the Place in the evening, had also gone off, believing the victory of their cause to be complete. When the arrival of M. Jules Ferry and his forces became known to the insurgents, a first attempt at conciliation was made by Delescluze, who had taken no active part in the movement. He sent word that he should like to speak with M. Ferry, and this being agreed to, he came outside and declared that he appeared as a mediator, that the affair was a deplorable one, and that the great thing was to arrange it without bloodshed. He asked M. Ferry for a delay of half an hour, with the view of effecting a compromise, and this was readily granted. Repairing at once to the room where Blanqui,

Flourens, Millière, and Ranvier were deliberating, he then obtained their consent to a declaration setting forth that the Hôtel de Ville should be evacuated, providing the Commune was elected on the morrow. At this moment Flourens was apprized that a sergeant and four men, belonging to a company of Breton Mobiles, had just been found in the cellars; he ordered them to be disarmed and placed under arrest; and was thunderstruck when he discovered that an entire battalion of Mobiles had penetrated into the Hôtel de Ville by a subterranean passage leading from an adjacent barracks. The situation was now most critical for the insurgents. It was rumoured that General Ducrot was approaching with 10,000 men and two batteries of artillery. The cry was heard, "We are surrounded, we are no longer the strongest!" In haste the leaders of the movement sought for M. Dorian, the popular Minister of Public Works, who had remained in the building throughout the afternoon and evening, endeavouring to conciliate the adverse parties. He readily promised that no proceedings should be taken against the insurgents for anything which had transpired that day, and also agreed that the municipal elections should take place on the morrow, and that the Government should submit itself to election two days later. Accompanied by Flourens he parleyed with the commander of the Mobiles—who had just discovered valiant M. Etienne Arago hiding from the insurgents behind a stack of wood in the cellars—and prevailed on him not to resort to any measures of violence.

Delescluze had hastened to inform M. Jules Ferry of the convention concluded with M. Dorian, but M. Ferry now declined to accept any conditions, and

insisted on an unconditional surrender. One of the gates having been opened by the Gardes Mobiles, he and the National Guards with him were at length able to enter the building. On reaching the Government council-room, they found the ringleaders of the movement endeavouring to obtain from their prisoners a formal ratification of the convention arrived at with M. Dorian. General Tamisier, Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, was willing to accept the conditions; and citizens Blanqui and Flourens subsequently declared that M. Favre and his colleagues also gave their assent. On the other hand, it is stated that they did not utter a single word either one way or the other.* The sudden advent of M. Ferry and his followers brought the scene to an abrupt close. The members of the Government were delivered, and the insurgents at once dispersed; those who made any attempt at resistance being summarily ejected by their victors. Citizens Millière and Ranvier got away as best they could. The flight of citizen Blanqui was considerably protected by General Tamisier, and citizen Flourens—who had all along shown more sang-froid than any of his fellows—quietly mounted on horseback, rallied his battalion of tirailleurs on the Place, in the midst of hostile detachments of the Garde Mobile; and it having been agreed with M. Dorian, with the view of preventing a conflict, that no shouts of “Vive la Commune!” should be raised, the revolutionary forces filed off, acclaiming the Republic. General Trochu had, meanwhile, left the Louvre; and, accompanied by General Ducrot, he passed the National Guards,

* Evidence taken at Blanqui's trial in February, 1872.

gathered together by M. Ferry, in review on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, where he met with a most enthusiastic reception. It was now between three and four o'clock in the morning. The Government—which had been in peril since one o'clock on the preceding afternoon—had been rescued, and was again paramount; so, worn out with excitement, and eager for repose, everybody went off to bed.*

III. THE FRUITS OF SEDITION.

When the Government met in Council on the 1st of November, a debate was at once opened, concerning the convention concluded by M. Dorian with the Red Republican leaders; and also on the subject of certain notices signed Dorian, Schœlcher, and Etienne Arago, which summoned the citizens to elect four municipal representatives for each arrondissement, and which had been placarded throughout Paris on the preceding evening. These latter were at once disavowed, and it was determined to issue a proclamation informing the inhabitants that on the following Thursday they would be called upon to vote—yes or no—whether they were desirous of immediate governmental and municipal elections. This proclamation was drawn up by M. Jules Favre, and posted on the walls of Paris the same afternoon. As regards M. Dorian's promise that none of the sequestrators of the Government should be

* This description of the manifestation of October 31 is based on personal observation; on the accounts in the newspapers of the epoch; the evidence subsequently taken by Parliamentary Commissions, or given at Blanqui's trial; as well as on Flourens' account in his work "Paris Livré;" Blanqui's printed statements; and M. Dréo's "Summary of the Government Deliberations."

punished, opinions were very divided. M. Garnier-Pagès stated that as he left the Hôtel de Ville, he had told Delescluze that he might consider himself a free man, and he could not recall those words. M. Henri Rochefort—who it will be recollected had prudently kept out of harm's way—considered the manifestation to have been of “so grave a character, that no punishment would be sufficiently severe; for the men who took part in it had, in presence of the enemy, abandoned their post, to try and overthrow the Government.” He was of opinion that the ringleaders “should be punished with the greatest severity, or else that nothing should be done at all.” M. Jules Ferry was strenuously opposed to the Dorian convention. He had been, he said, complete master of the situation, and had taken no engagement whatsoever. Had he chosen, “he could have thrown the promoters of the manifestation out of the windows of the Hôtel de Ville.” These words aroused the indignation of M. Edmond Adam, Prefect of Police, who believed a convention had been concluded, and who, with the fear of “a preponderant reaction” before his eyes, thought fit, there and then, to hand in his resignation. The Procuror-General and the Procuror of the Republic, who were summoned to the Council, were in favour of great severity being shown in the future, but they were opposed to any proceedings being taken for what had already transpired. General Trochu and M. Picard argued against this doctrine; the former observing that what Paris required was present, not future, energy; but M. Jules Simon intervened, and remarked that several members of the Government would inevitably resign, if the project to arrest the ringleaders of the preceding day were carried out. He asked his colleagues to reflect

before creating a schism in the Government, and his persuasive eloquence prevailed. The question whether the invaders of the Hôtel de Ville should be prosecuted or not, was put to the vote, and momentarily negatived by six votes against four. General Tamisier having resigned his command of the National Guard, ostensibly on the ground of ill-health, but possibly from a consciousness of his own insufficiency, was replaced by M. Clement Thomas, who announced his acceptance of the post before the Council separated.

It was All Saints' Day, which the Parisians invariably keep as a fête, and considerable crowds of quiet citizens, accompanied by their wives and daughters, flocked to view the scene of the late demonstration. The Place de l'Hôtel de Ville was, however, occupied by battalions of National Guards, who had piled their firearms round its three open sides, so as to form a complete barrier, which no one unless duly authorized was permitted to pass. In other parts of the city considerable effervescence prevailed, both during the daytime, when some of the Radical agitators endeavoured to proceed with the Communist elections at certain Mairies still in their power, and in the evening, when the clubs were crowded, and violent speeches, both in favour of and against the Government, were made. At the Council held on the morrow—the solemn “Day of the Dead,” this year a more mournful anniversary than ever—the Prefect of Police persisted in resigning his functions, despite the vote of the preceding day; and after deciding to replace him by an advocate, M. Cresson, the Government by a sudden revulsion of opinion recalled its previous decision, anent the prosecution of the Red Republican leaders, and resolved, by six votes against four, that

the promoters of Monday's demonstration should be arrested that very night. This result must be attributed to the influence which MM. Trochu, Favre, Picard, and Ferry brought to bear on their colleagues. Accordingly, between the 2nd and 5th of November, the police arrested and conducted to the Conciergerie citizens Ranvier, Millière, Mottu, Félix Pyat, Joly, Vesinier, Cyrille, Tridon, Goupil, Mégy, Eudes, Ignard, Levraud, Pillot, Vermorel, Tibaldi, Jaclard, Razoua, Ducoudray, Peyrouton, and Lefrançais—all of whom subsequently acquired notoriety as participators in the insurrection of 1871. The celebrated Raoul Rigault, at that moment one of the Government Commissaries of Police, was also arrested, but almost immediately afterwards released; whilst the warrants issued for the apprehension of citizens Flourens and Blanqui could not be executed, as these two conspirators were in hiding. M. Emmanuel Arago interceded for the release of Félix Pyat, "that veteran of democracy," who was, however, detained prisoner until the authorities found no charge could be proved against him. The magistrate investigating the affair also informed the Government that he could not establish the culpability of several other prisoners, who had indeed been arrested mainly because their opinions were distasteful to those in power.

Meanwhile, General Trochu had issued a stirring proclamation to the loyal National Guards; had threatened to disarm and dissolve those factious battalions which ventured henceforth to manifest in arms, and had revoked nine Communist chefs-de-bataillon from their commands. On the other hand, the Garde Mobile sent an address to the Government protesting of its devotion, and declaring that it would neither recognize nor obey the Commune of Paris.

But little attention was paid to the announcement that, owing to the adjournment of the Municipal Elections, citizen Henri Rochefort had resigned his seat as a member of the Government. His hour of popularity had gone by. General Trochu and his colleagues had considerably modified the terms of their "appeal to the people." The latter were no longer to be asked if a Government and a Municipality should be elected within a brief delay. Elections for district mayors and adjoints, and not for a Central Communal Council, were fixed to take place on the 5th of November; whilst, as regards themselves, the rulers of the Hôtel de Ville resumed the plebiscitum in the following query:—"Does the population of Paris—yes or no—maintain the powers of the Government of National Defence?" The vote on this important point was fixed for Thursday, November 3; and on the preceding evening the Parisians, who had been discussing the probabilities of an armistice—which M. Jules Favre declared would not be accepted unless based on the re-provisioning of Paris, and the election of a National Assembly by the entire country—were agreeably surprised on learning from a despatch signed Crémieux, Glais Bizoin, and Gambetta, and purporting to come from Tours, that General Cambriels had gained a victory in the Vosges, and had destroyed a Landwehr Corps of 6000 men. This despatch was printed in the evening papers, which received it as from the Hôtel de Ville; but on the morning of the 3rd the Government announced that it was a forgery perpetrated by some of the agitators of the 31st of October, who had stolen a quantity of official note-paper. The Red Republican organs, and a Communist Central Committee, had meanwhile been very busy

advising the electors to vote "no" to the Government plebiscitum; but a decided current of reaction had set in, and 321,373 citizens voted in support of the rulers of the time, against 53,585, who desired their overthrow.* Shortly before midnight, when the result of the vote became known, the National Guards flocked in crowds to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville and to General Trochu's residence at the Louvre, and consecrated the plebiscitum by a most enthusiastic demonstration. By the glare of torches, and amid the cheers of thousands, the members of the Government appeared, and as usual proceeded to perorate; crowning their oratorical efforts by an eloquent proclamation which covered the walls of Paris on the following morning.

The Government was naturally jubilant at the result of its appeal to public confidence; but it was less pleased with the district Municipal Elections of the following Saturday, when several candidates of well-known Communist proclivities—including citizens Ranvier, Mottu, and Delescluze—were returned. That same afternoon M. Jules Favre, accompanied by General Ducrot, had an interview with M. Thiers at the foot of the bridge of Sèvres. The veteran statesman's pilgrimage through Europe, in search of allies for defeated France, had been a trying one. First he had gone to England, where he found some sympathy for France, but also much circumspection. Being impressed with the idea that if

* The voting of the army, including the Garde Mobile, is not comprised in these figures. It resulted as follows:—236,623 "yes," against 9053 "no;" giving a general total of 557,996 ayes, against 62,638 noes; or a proportion of 9 to 1 in favour of the Government, for the entire male population of the invested circle.

Russia could be gained, England would likewise extend a helping hand, he proceeded to St. Petersburg, where he found that powerful ties linked Russia to Germany. The Czar promised his influence, but not his armies; and Prince Gortschakoff urged him to go at once to Versailles and make peace. His powers did not enable him to do so; and accordingly he journeyed to Vienna, where sympathy was again extended to him, and material aid denied. At Florence the King was desirous of doing something, and the Italian generals were also willing, but the ministers would not hear of armed intervention. Nothing, therefore, remained for M. Thiers but to retrace his steps to Tours. On his arrival there he found that Russia and England had taken some steps in common to facilitate negotiations for an armistice; and the four neutral powers eventually agreed to second a proposal to that effect. The King of Prussia and Count von Bismarck having consented to receive M. Thiers, and to allow him to enter Paris to confer with the Government, he set out for Versailles; and on October 30 he had an interview with General Trochu and his colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He informed them of the fall of Metz, which he found they ignored,* and pressed them to treat for peace.

M. Thiers remained in Paris that night, and returned to Versailles on the following afternoon, knowing that great agitation prevailed in the city, but unaware of the sequestration of the Government. He was empowered to treat for a suspension of hostilities on the basis of the re-victualling of Paris, and the election of a National Assembly. He asked Count

* M. Thiers' evidence before the Committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the insurrection of the Commune.

von Bismarck for a month's provisions, as from twenty-five to thirty days would be required to elect and gather together a representative assembly to pronounce on the momentous question of peace or war. The German statesman was opposed to any electoral agitation in Alsace; but he suggested that the French Government might themselves convoke a number of Alsatian notables, who would be quite free to express their opinions;* and on the whole the negotiations were progressing favourably, when, on the 3rd of November, Count von Bismarck asked M. Thiers if he knew that a revolution had broken out in Paris. M. Thiers was thunderstruck. He had no notion of what was going on in the city. With the sanction of the German authorities, he at once despatched into the capital one of his secretaries, who returned the same night with a full account of the proceedings of the 31st of October. True, the Government had regained the upperhand, but the situation was no longer the same. The explosion of sedition which had occurred seriously alarmed the German authorities. The re-victualling of Paris would, in Count von Bismarck's opinion, prolong the resistance of the city, and would not conduce to peace; and he, therefore, refused to grant it without obtaining certain "military compensations;" which he eventually specified as "the surrender of a fort, and possibly of more than one."

M. Thiers protested against such a stipulation, and the negotiations abruptly closed, Count von Bismarck merely agreeing to an armistice without the re-provisioning of Paris. M. Thiers accordingly had an interview with M. Jules Favre, at Sèvres, on the

* M. Thiers' report to the Government at Tours.

5th of November, and acquainted him with the position of affairs. M. Favre in turn communicated the result of this interview to his colleagues, mentioning that Count von Bismarck had, in the course of conversation, incidentally told M. Thiers that peace, at that moment, meant "*the cession of Alsace, and the payment of three milliards of francs as war indemnity; after the fall of Paris, the conditions would be the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, and the payment of five milliards.*"* An animated debate followed M. Favre's communications. General Trochu declared that he had never believed in an armistice; and added that if the country could not triumph, it would only fall after a valiant resistance. Some dissatisfaction was expressed *à propos* of M. Thiers' reticence concerning the Departments, the condition of which was believed to be very bad; and it was resolved, on the one hand, that he should return to Tours without any further instructions from the Government, and, on the other, that the Parisians should be apprized that Prussia, declining to allow the re-victualling of the city, the armistice had been unanimously refused by the Government. This was done in a short proclamation issued the same afternoon, and by the publication, in the *Journal Officiel* of a few days later, of a circular, addressed by M. Jules Favre to the French diplomatic agents abroad.

Paris was not particularly affected by the falling through of the negotiations. Hatred of the detested foe who "trod the sacred soil of the country," was still paramount. The hope of vengeance still stimulated every patriot breast; and, undaunted by the

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

early approach of winter, the privations and hardships which had been already endured, and the still greater ones looming ahead, the Parisians mustered up all their courage—resolving to oppose “une résistance à outrance” to the efforts of the enemy.

IX.

WAITING FOR SUCCOUR.

I. WHAT PARIS WAS LIKE IN NOVEMBER.

THOSE who know Paris as Paris is commonly known to foreigners, as a city of ease and luxury, would hardly have recognized it under its siege aspect. It had none of its former fascinations, and but few of its ordinary avocations, left to it; and in fact, with nine-tenths of its able-bodied population under arms, one could hardly expect it to be a hive of industry or an abode of pleasure. Paris is ordinarily a capital of late hours; but in these times, police regulations, and the failure in the supply of gas, constrained one to go to bed early; lulled to sleep, so to speak, by the booming of the cannon. Before daybreak one was aroused, if not by the same kind of music, by the sounding of the réveil, supplemented by the beating of the rappel, and the bawling out of false news by the hawkers of the cheap morning newspapers. Foreigners, at least, were not obliged to sally forth ere it was light on some round of military duty, though twice a week, such of them as were so inclined, might stand in queue outside the butchers' shops for several hours, and so make certain of securing, as long as they lasted, their three days' rations of meat—now reduced to a fraction over one ounce avoirdupois per diem.

Among the very earliest risers, on November 8,

were a number of British, Swiss, and Austrian subjects, who, having been granted permission to pass through the German lines, quitted the once fascinating city of pleasure, by the Porte de Charenton, at 7 A.M. The party comprised about fifty Austrians and Swiss, and some sixty or seventy Englishmen. Very many more of the latter would have been only too glad to get away; but the British Embassy thought it no part of its duty to apprize English residents, besieged in Paris, of the opportunity afforded them of escaping impending bombardment or inevitable famine, beyond affixing a notice in the Consular Office, where but a small percentage were likely to see it; a notice supplemented, moreover, with the unique proviso that "*the Embassy could not charge itself*"—the italics are its own—"with the expense of assisting British subjects to leave Paris." Many who wished to get away read the notice in question and returned home disconsolate to their meagre rations, pondering on the number of millions England had spent to get a few Englishmen out of Abyssinia; while others—who went a step further, admitted their poverty, and demanded to be sent home—were handed over to the British Charitable Fund, which gave them 4*l.* apiece, with two or three pounds of biscuits and two or three ounces of chocolate to munch along the road.

The English party was to have left on the 2nd of November, with the citizens of the United States and the subjects of the Czar; but a misunderstanding arose, owing to the fact that the British Government had not recognized the Republic; and Mr. Washburne, the popular and influential American Minister, had to intervene to obtain the necessary authorization for British subjects to depart. The latter were

accompanied by the Hon. Mr. Wodehouse, Second Secretary of Her Majesty's Embassy, and by the British Vice-Consul ; and the friends of many of the fugitives were allowed to proceed as far as the German lines, and see them safely on their way. Quite a couple of hours were occupied in examining passports and filling in "safe conducts;" and when these formalities were accomplished, leave-takings ensued, and one section of the assemblage which had gathered together, went hopefully forward into promised lands overflowing with milk and honey, while the other retraced their steps to the beleaguered city, to partake of what was still by sheer force of habit entitled "breakfast."

If we take an early stroll on one of these chill November mornings, we shall still find the Champs Elysées crowded with detachments of the National Guard going through their daily drill ; preparing, in fact, for the sortie in force so loudly clamoured for, but as yet withheld. Already, on November 6, one learnt that the military forces in and about the city had been divided into three armies, of which General Trochu reserved the supreme command. The first, comprising 266 battalions of National Guard, was placed under the orders of General Clement Thomas ; the second, composed of three corps d'armée and a division of cavalry, under those of General Ducrot ; while the third, consisting of seven divisions of infantry and two brigades of cavalry, was to be commanded by the Governor of Paris in person.* Following the formation of these armies, the National

* On November 9, General Trochu relinquished this command in favour of General Vinoy.

Guard was mobilized—a measure which fostered hopes of speedy action. But as yet General Schmitz's stereotyped military reports have merely recorded some petty reconnaissance undertaken in one direction, or mentioned that one of the forts has been throwing shells in another. What are we waiting for? the Parisians ask themselves in mid-November. For the long-promised armies of succour—those armies which were to spring into existence directly citizen Gambetta reached Tours, and concerning which our knowledge is of the vaguest kind? Disease and famine are already stalking in our midst, and the miles of batteries with which the enemy has encircled us will assuredly before long open fire. Multitudinous precautions have been taken in anticipation of the destruction which a bombardment might cause. The famous horses of Marly—the chefs-d'œuvre of Coustou—which rise at the entrance of the Champs Elysées, have, like the groups of the Arc de Triomphe, been boxed in timber, and buried under sandbags. At the Louvre, Jean Goujon's admirable bas-reliefs are coated with plaster. All the entrances of the Museum are walled up, and the many art treasures here, as at the Luxembourg and the Hôtel de Cluny, have been placed in safety. It is the same with the valuable books and manuscripts of the National and the Mazarin Libraries, with the State and the Municipal Archives; and even the precious instruments of the Observatory have been consigned to the cellars of the building—for it is feared, and with reason, that in the event of a bombardment the Observatory would be one of the first points menaced by the enemy's shells.

If we betake ourselves to the quays lining the Seine,

we shall find at the Halle aux Vins all the superfluous casks of wine for which room could not be found in the overcrowded cellars—so well has Paris taken care of its “stomach’s sake”—buried under earth and sand ; while at the adjacent Jardin des Plantes the cages of the more ferocious and less edible animals have been walled in ; to save Paris, in case of a bombardment, from being exposed to an onslaught of ravenous wild beasts in addition to all the inconveniences, not to say horrors, of a famine and a hailstorm of Prussian projectiles. Close by stands the Orleans Railway Station, where the brothers Godard have installed their balloon factory, and whence, wind and weather permitting, ascents are continually made. Following the banks of the Seine, we find the river almost choked with barges, which sought refuge within the walls of the capital when the advance of the Prussians was signalled, and which, cleared of their cargoes and deserted by their crews, present quite a melancholy spectacle in the midst of the martial life around. Crossing over to the island of La Cité, and winding round by the side of Notre Dame, we come to the artillery park of the Garde Nationale where citizen Henri Rochefort, no longer Member of the Government, nor even President of Barricades, now does duty. The Morgue is at hand—people commit suicide quite as frequently as ever, and scarcely a day passes without some corpse being laid out on the marble slabs for purposes of recognition. Not a single mason is to be seen at work on the buildings of the new Hôtel Dieu, nor, for the matter of that, on any one of the thousand or two unfinished houses in the Haussmannized quarters of the city, where, by the way, scores and scores of apartments are to be let for

about one-tenth part of what was asked for them a few months ago. We are but a few paces from the Sainte Chapelle, where the lofty and unrivalled painted glass windows, by Pinaigrier, are completely hidden behind piles of sandbags, turf, and huge timber supports. Nothing appears to have been done for the protection of the roof, but the antique encaustic tiles with which the interior of the edifice is paved, as well as the flagstones outside, have all been taken up, so that the Prussian shells may have the chance of burying themselves in the soft earth.

If we enter the Chamber of Correctional Police, at the adjoining Palais de Justice, we are almost certain to find a gang of marauders arraigned before the tribunal, on the charge of having plundered some handsome château, some charming villa, or modest maisonnette in the environs of the capital. No wonder, with next to no police to protect our property, that house robberies have been uncommonly rare inside Paris since the arrival of the Prussians; the housebreaking fraternity have enjoyed a couple of months' liberty of action over that immense circuit, extending from the walls of the fortifications to the enemy's advanced posts. Most of the abandoned houses which have escaped being broken into by the Prussians or the Mobiles, have been sacked by the Parisian marauders, who have brought many thousands of pounds' worth of plunder within the walls, pretending that it was property of their own which they were removing into Paris to save it from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Proceeding to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville—in front of which the Avenue Victoria is blocked up with long files of ambulance omnibuses and vans

awaiting the signal to start off in some given direction outside the walls—one is almost surprised to find no armed demonstration of National Guards going forward, as was continually the case in the earlier days of the siege. Within the building, the Government of National Defence is doubtless assembled in Council. It is as verbose as ever, this “Gouvernement de Plaideurs,” and throughout these long weeks in November reports and proclamations abound. If, Asmodeus-like, we penetrate into the council-room where we last left the men of the Hôtel de Ville debating concerning the armistice negotiations, we shall find that the discussions now principally refer to the advisability of electing a National Assembly without any suspension of hostilities—a proposal which M. Jules Favre seems to patronize, but which is strenuously opposed by his colleagues, and eventually abandoned. Then the Bazaine treason is discussed at length, and the acts of the Tours Delegation, and especially its silence, are more or less severely criticized. The Morgan loan forms a very frequent subject of debate, and several members of the Government are in favour of utterly repudiating it. The state of the provisioning, with which we shall have to deal by-and-by, is constantly alluded to; and military matters crop up every now and then. M. Picard insinuates (Nov. 12) that the army is demoralized, and remarks that there are two issues to the present situation, either immediate negotiations or a forced capitulation, towards which latter we are steadily marching. General Trochu denies that the army is demoralized, and declares that he never said that success was impossible, although the very same day he alludes to the resistance of Paris as “an heroic folly.” On the

morrow he again alludes to the military situation. "He is pained," he says, "at the continual demands for a battle." The cannons which private firms are casting will not be ready for twenty days; whilst the National Guards, whom he proposes to utilize in the sorties, are quite without cartridge pouches.

Of one proclamation issued by the Governor of Paris in these days of waiting for sorties and succour, special mention must be made. This is addressed to the garrison of St. Denis, and condemns the laxity of discipline prevalent among the Mobiles quartered in that neighbourhood. Four officers of the Garde Mobile, it would appear, had accepted an invitation to breakfast sent them by some young Prussian officers, and went in full uniform to the château of Stains, where a sumptuous repast had been provided. Before sitting down the guests required their hosts to pledge their words that no sort of surprise, nor any movement of troops, should be made while the entertainment lasted. In fact, a kind of armistice was entered into, which the Prussians religiously observed; but the affair coming to the ears of General Trochu, he visits the whole garrison of St. Denis with a severe reprimand. Among other matters of interest to us Parisians, which are debated in the Government councils at this epoch, is the question of the caricatures; and eventually the Prefect of Police is empowered to seize all disgusting or obscene designs (Nov. 15). On the same day, valiant M. Etienne Arago, who hid in the cellars behind a pile of faggots when the rioters of October 31 sequestered the authorities, resigns his functions as Mayor of Paris; and M. Jules Ferry, who contributed so powerfully to the rescue of his colleagues,

is appointed to succeed him. M. Arago does not, however, retire empty-handed, for he is gratified with an important post at the Mint—the pattern pieces at which establishment are, it is said, the only examples of gold coin remaining in Paris.

Silver is tolerably plentiful, and there are a certain number of banknotes of five-and-twenty francs in circulation; but you are charged a premium if you seek to obtain any of them in exchange for others of greater value; the Bank of France, moreover, absolutely declining to give small notes for large ones. The money changers of the Rue Vivienne and the Palais Royal are mostly closed, or else they decline to do business; and those foreigners who have hoarded up little stores of their own currency find a difficulty in getting rid of them. Money is decidedly scarce in Paris, and the Government has done all it could to alleviate this distressing state of affairs. It began by deferring commercial payments; it then deferred the payment of rent, even for lodgings; and lastly, it gave a payment of one shilling and twopence per diem to each National Guard; while, later on, it added 7*d.* for the wives of those citizen soldiers who were married. At present it is distributing great quantities of clothes, firing, and, above all—food. Private charity has, moreover, come to the rescue; but the misery is still increasing. For those who possess anything they can dispose of, there exists, of course, that last resource, the Mont de Piété, which will not, however, lend more than 2*l.* on any article, no matter what its value may be.

In ordinary times money may be made by successful speculations on 'Change; but there is scarcely any speculation at all going on at the Bourse just now.

The temple of Mammon has become little more than a club. Should you pay it a visit during the hours of business, you will find a few agents de change in half-uniform of the National Guard, surrounded by a score of clients, some of whom are doing their utmost to emulate the familiar din of former days, by shouting out at the highest pitch of their voices the prices of stocks, for which there are no buyers, whilst others quietly discuss the news of the day; the Rente meanwhile rising a few sous above, or falling a trifle under, 54*fr.*

The boulevards have less than ever their aspect of Imperial times. Where they are most thronged the kerb is lined with hawkers of canteens and képis, sacs and ceintures, brandy flasks and breast-plates, sword-sticks and knapsacks, telescopes and gaiters, caricatures and photographs—both of the latter frequently being of a most indecent description. The vendors of these miscellaneous wares invariably sport the képi, and occasionally the full uniform of the Garde Nationale, so as to give a kind of character to their calling. A caricature, in which the Pope figures offensively, has been several times burned in public in broad daylight, out of consideration for the Bretons, who are our best soldiers, although very bigoted, and for whom their compatriot, General Trochu, has reserved all the pigs in Paris, because of their unquarable repugnance to horseflesh.

The boulevards are a dreary enough promenade both in the daytime and at night; the flaneur has disappeared in the soldier, the Parisienne in the hospital nurse. Sombre toilettes have become the rule, sack-cloth and ashes are the mode; an elegantly dressed woman would incur the risk of being mobbed; even

pianos are no longer permitted to be played by our censors of the hour, the National Guards. The correct thing to do now is to have yourself weighed once a week to see how many pounds you have lost on a low and limited diet; and the individual who set up the first weighing machine on the Boulevard Montmartre to register the Paris light-weights has had a profitable time of it. As for the shops, the most attractive are those of the *marchands de comestibles*, with the unknown contents of their tall pyramids of tin canisters; and the gunsmiths', with their varieties of new firearms. A sympathetic crowd gathers, moreover, in front of Goupil's window, where Gustave Doré's new drawing, "Let us save Paris," is displayed; but the print-sellers generally have given themselves up to selling nothing but maps of Paris and its fortifications.

The dearth of new volumes at the booksellers' has already been alluded to. One branch of siege literature may be studied most completely under the arcades of the Rue de Rivoli, where one can read, as it were, the history of Paris day by day in the innumerable broadsides placarded over the walls. First, there are all the Government decrees: relative to the Red Republican demonstration; inviting a patriotic subscription for the casting of 1500 cannon; requiring declarations to be made of all live stock, grain, and fodder, in the hands of private persons, with a view to their acquisition by the State; notifying the mobilization of the sedentary National Guard; proclaiming that the town of Châteaudun by its heroic resistance has deserved well of the country; reserving the decoration of the Legion of Honour as the reward for acts of bravery in presence of the enemy; devoting

a sum of 40,000 francs for the construction of a navigable balloon; announcing the rejection of the armistice, and the arrival of despatches from Tours; calling out all the able-bodied men between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age; fixing the price of butchers' meat, horseflesh, and bread for the ensuing week; notifying that the Government will buy mules and asses to feed the population upon; ordering all cafés and wine-shops to turn off their gas at nine, and to close at half-past ten o'clock at night, and postponing the payment of all bills of exchange and rent.

Then come the orders of the day of the Governor of Paris, complimenting the behaviour of particular corps on the occasion of some recent petty sortie, signifying the hours at which the gates of the capital will be open and shut, forbidding the exit or entry of individuals unprovided with proper papers, interdicting civilians from proceeding along the military roads skirting the ramparts, and finally, promising the Parisians to lead them to the long-expected "sortie en masse;" next, the orders of the day of the Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, municipal decrees with reference to the rationing of the inhabitants of Paris, and others concerning religious and secular education. There are also announcements respecting the transmission of post-office orders and of newspapers not exceeding one-eighth of an ounce in weight by balloon-post; notices of the days and hours of meeting of the democratic and socialist clubs, and the prospectuses of mutual fire and life assurance societies, specially established consequent upon the siege. Then we have proposals for the construction of movable fortresses; for the formation of those ten battalions of Amazons of the Seine, which have

already been spoken of; and for taking possession of all the coin in the cellars of the Bank of France, and applying it to the casting of more cannon: with notices on sanitary matters and the water supply, and others indicating the precautions to be taken against the effects of a bombardment. Finally, side by side with the oracular addresses of Edgar Quinet and Victor Hugo, are advertisements of "plastrons" of metal, leather, parchment, pasteboard, felt, india-rubber, and gutta-percha, as protection against Prussian bullets, and of "pansements," for the staunching of wounds, should the breast-plate prove inefficacious.

The only shops in Paris which one finds closed are the various *crémeries* and *rotisseries*, with certain restaurants unable to procure a sufficient supply of meat, and *cafés* that have been forsaken by their customers. The jewellers' and modistes' establishments, and the *magasins de nouveautés*, all keep open as usual, although they have, of course, nothing but their old stock remaining. No doubt there are more false stones than real in the necklaces and bracelets exposed for sale, and more "*bijouterie d'imitation*" than of "*or*" or "*argent*." Are there any fashions now in European capitals, and how will it be when Paris surrenders, or the siege is raised? Shall we be all behind the mode, or will Europe, or the world rather, be awaiting our decrees? Is Prussia equally bent on wresting from us the empire of Fashion and the fair provinces of Alsace and Lorraine? Who has invented the new winter chapeau and the new winter mantle? They can hardly have emanated from Paris by balloon-post, for all our *journaux de modes* have long since ceased to appear.

For weeks past one has observed, in addition to ammunition and baggage waggons parading the streets in files, frequent strings of carts laden with sand destined for the courtyards of such houses as were unprovided with this specific against Prussian projectiles, in the hope that all the shells thrown into Paris may bury themselves in the soft bed prepared for them, and so do but little damage. Ascending the faubourg in the direction of Montmartre, one finds the exterior boulevards, here as elsewhere—all round Paris, in fact—lined with a double row of long low huts, in which the Gardes Mobiles are quartered. On the eminence in the rear of the Place St. Pierre, and nearly a mile within the walls of Paris, is the huge battery of Montmartre, destined to sweep the plain of St. Ouen in the event of the Prussians becoming masters of St. Denis. Here also is an electric lighthouse, projecting its rays over a distance of 4000 yards, and enabling the gunners of the battery to point their cannon at any approaching detachment of the enemy's troops whilst they themselves remain in comparative darkness. In the Avenue de Saint Ouen, only a few minutes' walk distant, one encounters a cavalcade of wounded soldiers coming into Paris, including covered vans marked with the red cross of the Geneva Convention, cacolets (a sort of hammock slung on either side of a mule, and on which the wounded man reclines), and ordinary stretchers, borne by a couple of men. Women advance out of the crowd and offer the sufferers water and various cooling drinks, while the men occasionally give them cigarettes. Now and then a feeble shout of "Vive la Republique!" will proceed from the parched lips, and be taken up and re-echoed by the assembled crowd, as the procession moves on its way.

In the earlier days of the siege mirth was almost an offence ; but it soon became evident to everybody that amusements of some kind were necessary. The only places of resort were the clubs—those hotbeds of dissension—and the Government acted wisely in authorizing various matinées, musicales, and classiques, and numerous conferences (readings or lectures) for the benefit of the wounded, which were given at such of the theatres as had not yet been converted into ambulances, or turned to other purposes connected with the siege. Possibly the most successful of the conferences was one delivered by M. de Lapommeraye, who established a comparison between Molière's "*Tartuffe*" and his Excellency Count von Bismarck—the one the *Tartuffe* of religion, the other the *Tartuffe* of politics. These entertainments having met with great success, several theatres are now opened two or three afternoons a week. Gas having become far too precious to be wasted for purposes of amusement, both stage and auditorium are illuminated either with petroleum lamps, impregnating the atmosphere with smell and smoke, or with candles, giving a soft and pleasant light enough, but leaving a bitter graveyard chill in every corner of the house. At the lively little Bouffes, where Chaumont prattled and Schneider sang, an audience, buried in furs and swathed with wraps, applauds the bombastic tirades of the "*Cid*," or laughs and weeps in turn over the glowing verses of the "*Châtiments*." That sanctuary of French dramatic art, the Comédie Française, ministers as best it can to the "*besoin de distractions*" which has asserted itself in spite, or perhaps on account of, the threatening dangers of the hour ; and twice a week the whilom "*Comedians of the Emperor*," clad in ordinary attire, perform one or

another of Racine's and Molière's chefs-d'œuvre. At the Ambigu, however, you will find all the usual stage costumes and accessories brought to illustrate a "*pièce de circonstance*," entitled "*Les Paysans Lorrains*." Afternoon performances are alone indulged in at the foregoing theatres; but the Opera House in the Rue Lepelletier has already given a few evening entertainments, and, strange to relate, the Parisians have flocked in crowds to listen to the music of "those Prussians," Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer. One siege audience is the portrait of another, and from pit to gallery the eye invariably lights on uniforms and sable dresses. The usual order of things is, in fact, utterly reversed. It is the masculine element, formerly condemned to solemn evening black, which supplies the few perceivable bits of brightness, in the facings and galloons of military uniforms—those of the National Guard being naturally predominant; whilst the fair sex, whose gay toilettes and whose flashing jewels imparted such a brilliant effect in former times, now invariably appear in sombre garb. The belles of Paris are in mourning for the misfortunes of France.

On those days when the theatres do not open, afternoon recreation may be found in the promenade; though, should you betake yourself, as of old, to the Avenue de l'Impératrice—now styled the Avenue Urich—you will look in vain for the elegant cavalcade, the handsome equipages, the prancing steeds, the liveried lacqueys, the caracoling cavaliers, the aristocratic whips tooling their four-in-hands, the ravishing toilettes of the dames of the grand and demi-mondes, the English tigers, and the dwarfed English "*bouledogges*," whirling past to the Bois. Instead of this, you find the Avenue blocked with

barricades, and military and ambulance encampments; and see the artillery defile, followed by the ambulance train—the instrument of destruction, succeeded by the scalpel and the bandage—the hearse alone being wanted to complete the procession. In the garden of one of the charming villas at the further end of the Avenue, smoke is seen rising from a charcoal-burning furnace, recently installed there for the production of this article from timber felled in the Bois de Boulogne.

Grouped in front of the Arc de Triomphe—the pavement surrounding which is more than ankle-deep in sand, while the lower part of the edifice is cased with stout timber to protect the groups of sculpture from the effects of German shells—is a crowd of well-dressed people, including many ladies, gazing through pocket telescopes, and straining their eyes in the hope of seeing the glistening helmet of at least one Prussian, or at any rate the smoke from the guns of Mont Valérien or the Mortemart redoubt. In the Avenue de la Grande Armée, within a stone's-throw of the Arc de Triomphe, on the summit of which, by the way, a telegraph and signalling apparatus provided with the electric light is fixed, a stone fort has been constructed, protected by a deep ditch, and mounting several field-pieces, pointed to sweep the broad Avenue from one end to the other. All the outlets to the thoroughfare are walled up, all the dead walls loop-holed for musketry, while at the Porte Maillot end of the Avenue there is another stone redoubt, in advance of which the iron railings of the octroi post are cased with loop-holed sheet-iron and sustained with massive timber supports. In front of this again are the bastions of the ramparts, mounting rifled 32-pounders, and the heavy drawbridge thrown across the moat

and protected by a *tête de pont*, having formidable *chevaux de frise* and a complicated arrangement of iron wires and spikes—the one to trip up the too adventurous Prussian, the other to receive him on his fall. For some considerable distance in advance the trees have been felled and the houses pulled down; and for more than a mile—to the opposite side of the bridge of Neuilly, in fact—the road is mined at constantly recurring intervals from one end to the other. The side streets are all barricaded, the corner houses fortified and loopholed; while the handsome villas lining the banks of the Seine, up to the Bois de Boulogne, are turned into barracks for Linesmen and Mobiles, who have thrown up barricades of turf behind the garden railings, with apertures for musketry about two feet apart.

If we cannot escape from our cage, still, like other imprisoned animals, we can peep through its bars and perhaps even take a glimpse of our keepers. Beyond an excursion to one of the advanced forts, which requires a special pass from General Trochu, the only journey of any length open to us since the investment is the tour of the fortifications along the Chemin de Fer de Ceinture, and whenever the afternoon is invitingly fine the Parisians flock to the various stations in shoals. On Sundays entire families—the father in the uniform of the National Guard, while the son is perhaps a Mobile—occupy seats on the roofs of the carriages, and, duly provided with pocket telescopes, make the round, intent on obtaining a view of the bastions, the breech-loaders, the advanced redoubts, the exterior forts, and, above all, of the Prussians, of whom they are always hearing, and through whom they are now beginning to suffer so severely. The

railway ride round the ramparts affords many a curious coup d'œil. From the Seine at Grenelle to the Seine at Bercy there is a continual succession of redoubts, bastions, barricades, trenches, stockades, pièges-à-loups, and pitfalls, with miles of mined roadways adjacent to the line of the fortifications, and beyond invariably the same scene of devastation—demolished houses and outbuildings, razed walls and fences, destroyed gardens, stumps of felled trees, shrubs broken off at the roots, flowers trampled under foot, with débris of stone and plaster everywhere coating the black earth. On the lofty, double-storied bridge spanning the Seine at the Point du Jour one espies Cail's armour-plated locomotive mitrailleuse ready to open fire at any moment against the heights of Meudon; and here, as at Bercy, one finds a flotilla of iron-clad gunboats, whose projectiles sweep the stream for some considerable distance. All along one's route, moreover, the steep railway embankment is converted into an extra line of defence; and on all the available high grounds earthworks have been thrown up, and are now waiting for some of the 1500 cannon which private firms are said to be casting, and which, when ready, will be mounted so as to fire over the guns of the ramparts. One catches occasional glimpses of the forts, notably of Forts Issy and Vanves—believed to be the most vulnerable of all—and eventually of Bicêtre, in close proximity to the gloomy-looking historical château of the same name. Whenever the train stops the chances are that the drum is heard to beat and the trumpet to sound while some battalion of National Guards defiles along the military road skirting the ramparts. Old and young, rich and poor, veterans and conscripts, are seen mingled together in

the various companies. Some wear spectacles, others comforters, some are rheumatic, others bandy-legged, and a considerable proportion exhibit an undue development of stomach; but all look determined and prepared for the worst. Presently an aide-de-camp gallops past, and waggons laden with shot and shell rattle by, as the deep voice of the colonel shouting out his orders mingles with the whistle of the locomotive, which is again darting on its way.

A ride round the ramparts on the impériale of a railway carriage, with a fresh breeze blowing in your face, is a capital thing to get up an appetite; but then just now an appetite is scarcely a desideratum. Still, you must dine; and in default of anything better, the "noblest conquest ever made by man over nature" will provide you with a certain amount of sustenance. Well, so you dine; but so haunted are you by the idea of prospective starvation, that, in opposition to the Scriptural precept, you find your mind, soon after the last morsel of to-day's repast is swallowed, reverting to the dinner of to-morrow, on the pretence that the morrow will not take thought for the dinner of itself.

You have, however, the evening on your hands, and how to spend it is beset with difficulties. It is of no use consulting the "colonnes de spectacles," for these are placarded all over with the latest official decrees; nor the different theatrical agencies, for they have been turned into so many lottery offices, said to be for the benefit of the sick and wounded. To what straits must English playwrights be reduced for their plots now that Paris dramatists have exchanged their pens for chassepots! You may be so fortunate as to find that there is a concert at the Opera this evening; but as for all the other dancing and singing places, not a

fiddle is scraping, not a cornet-à-piston sounding among them all. In the Jardin Mabille a corps of Eclaireurs Parisiens is installed; at the Jardin Bullier the Chasseurs de Neuilly are quartered, whilst the Jardin de l'Etoile is occupied by a marching battalion of the Garde Nationale. At the Salle Valentino the Committee for the Conservation of the National Territory hold their sittings; and it was a prudent member of that body who supplemented M. Jules Favre's famous declaration—"Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses"—with "Not a sou of our treasure, not a drop of our blood." At the Alcazar the voice of Thérèse is stilled, but the lungs of the citizens of the Club de la Resistance allow themselves full play. At the Grand Concert Parisien, where Madame Bordas celebrated in doggerel verse the heroism of the Cuirassiers of Reichsoffen and nightly hurled the Prussians into the Carrières de Jaumont, you find another club installed. The Eldorado, the Folies Bergère, the Porcherons, the Pré aux Clercs, the Elysée Montmartre, the Folies Belleville, the Reine Blanche, and the Alhambra, have one and all been transformed into similar meeting places. Oracular orations have taken the place of the music and vocalism of yesterday. Hatred and contempt of the invader are expressed in spoken prose, and no longer find utterance in rhythmic song; for, although there is an incessant drumming and trumpeting all day long throughout the city, the strains of the Marseillaise are at present but rarely heard; as for the "Rhin Allemand," it might never have been written.

Evening lectures à propos of the situation are in course of delivery at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, where General Morin discourses upon the

action of powder in firearms, and the warming and ventilating of ambulances. Professor Baron Dupin treats of the principles of fortifications, strong places, entrenched camps, advanced works, and various accessory defences. Professor Tresca discusses the application of the general principles of mechanics to the construction of engines and machines of war; and Professor Payen descants on alimentary substances in reference to the siege, on meat, blood, gristle, bones, and fat, the theory of nutrition, and similar topics. The most attractive evening amusement appears, however, to be provided at the Paris shooting galleries, notably those on the Boulevard St. Michel, where something like half-a-dozen of these establishments are situated, at which ambitious marksmen are nightly obliged to form a queue while awaiting their turns to take aim.

If, however, you are neither for the clubs, nor the Arts et Métiers lectures, nor even for pistol practice, you are forced to resort to the dimly lighted boulevards, where you find more than two-thirds of the shops closed, and fully two-thirds of the public lamps unlighted. Gas has become exceedingly scarce in Paris during this month of November, and there is no coal left to furnish us with a fresh supply. The gas company has been endeavouring to overcome the difficulty by using petroleum, which is injected into the retorts in which the coal is ordinarily distilled; whilst, with the view of economizing the coke employed for heating the ovens, this combustible is partially replaced by the tar the process yields. Ever since the commencement of the siege the duration of the daily gas supply has been gradually diminishing, and eventually, on November 17, a police order is issued setting forth that,

from 7 P.M. until the following evening, no gas will be furnished to cafés, restaurants, and wine-shops ; though those establishments where other forms of illumination are adopted may still remain open until midnight. A few days later the Government is informed that the supply of gas will probably come to an end by the 10th of December, and accordingly notification of this fact is given by the authorities, who announce that in a short time the limited number of public lamps used for the lighting of the streets will be illuminated with petroleum, all available stocks of which are subsequently requisitioned with this object in view.

Those who only knew the Paris boulevards under their ordinary evening aspect will, therefore, scarcely recognize them now. You take your seat in some more or less deserted café—for it is only on special evenings when rumours abound that these establishments are at all thronged—and as you sip your maza-gran and puff your londrès, the hawkers of the evening papers pass by outside noisily proclaiming the titles or the contents of the prints they have for sale. You know, however, that they are unlikely to contain any news unless by chance an old number of some London daily journal has found its way into Paris through the German lines, when the struggle in front of the kiosques to secure copies, and learn what has been lately passing in the world outside—for Paris has at length come to feel that she is no longer the world in herself—will be most exciting. On the evening of November 14, the boulevards are crowded. There is, in fact, a complete jubilee in Paris, for one has learnt that the Army of the Loire is not a myth after all, but that General d'Aurelle de Paladines has gained a victory at Coulmiers and wrested Orléans from the

enemy's possession. Was it not at Orléans that, four centuries and a half ago, Jeanne d'Arc gained a victory which gave the first blow to the English dominion in France? And may there not to-day emanate from the same city the first movement which shall rid France of the hated presence of the Germans? Thus discourse the Parisians; whose satisfaction is increased when, on November 19, this welcome intelligence is confirmed by citizen Gambetta, who adds, that 2500 prisoners were captured at Coulmiers, that order reigns throughout all that portion of France still ruled by the Government of National Defence, and that Garibaldi has forced the enemy to evacuate Dijon. News like this stimulates the patriotism of invested Paris; and for the thousandth time we are told that no terms of peace must be listened to until every German has been chased from the national soil.

The petty reconnoissances and sorties of the hour also furnish topics of conversation, and the most extravagant rumours circulate regarding the number of German prisoners taken and the number of German soldiers slain. The exploits of Sergeant Hoff, of the 107th regiment of the line, are on every tongue. He has already slain no fewer than thirty Prussians, and doubtless he will pick off many more. His habit it would appear is to go out alone from his company and to return with some trophy—such as a helmet or a Snider rifle—in proof that he has killed one or more of the enemy's sentinels. He has been named in an order of the day, and has been decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honour amid the enthusiastic plaudits of his comrades. Certain citizens even suggest that General Trochu should resign his functions as Commander-in-Chief, and that the valiant Hoff

should be appointed to replace him.* Still it must not be imagined that the daring sergeant possesses a monopoly so far as deeds of valour are concerned. For several weeks past each boulevardian perorator has had some especial hero under his patronage, some particular exploit to extol, of which one may truly remark that he

" Who told it added something new,
While they who heard it made enlargement too ;
In every ear it spread, on every tongue it grew."

Your evening stroll along the boulevards no longer confronts you with those seemingly light-hearted pedestrians commonly associated with the spot. The individuals whom you encounter in lieu thereof are invariably more or less grave-looking, and not unfrequently positively depressed ; whilst one and all, without exception, wear the eternal and perpetual red stripes down the sides of their trousers. Now and then one stumbles upon some gloomy group of frivolous viveurs out of their element, while a very diminished contingent of painted women continues to stalk the pavement. There are, moreover, swarms of beggars, but their piteous whines are disregarded, for every one who wants food can obtain it gratis at the public canteens. The hawkers you met during the afternoon are still here importuning passers-by to purchase their

* Sergeant Hoff disappeared after the battle of Champigny, and by a sudden revulsion of public feeling it was then asserted that he was a spy, and that his visits to the outposts had been for the purpose of communicating intelligence to the besiegers. This statement was entirely false. Hoff was taken prisoner by the enemy, and was not released until peace had been concluded. In a letter made public in 1873, General Le Flô, Minister of War during the siege, testified to Hoff's valour and services whilst at the French outposts before Paris.

worthless wares, such as purses and photographs, grotesque statuettes of William and his little Bismarck, songs and sword-sticks, and above all, scurrilous pamphlets and caricatures. "Demandez la Plainte de Ratapoil Badinguet!" "Demandez le Sire de Framboisy, dont la femme danse le cancan avec tous ses amis!" "Demandez la Femme Bonaparte, ses Crimes et ses Orgies!" assail your ears in succession. Every now and then you find your progress interrupted by a host of open-air politicians vehemently discussing "the situation," declaiming against an armistice, and demanding that the "sortie en force" be no longer delayed; or a crowd encircling a group of juvenile street singers who have endeavoured to illuminate the surrounding obscurity by ends of lighted candles placed on the ground in front of them; or gathered round an old man who professes to imitate the notes of all the song-birds; or congregated before a one-legged player on the accordion, who, seated on a camp-stool, rests his wooden leg on a little mat, while a couple of comical-looking dogs, one holding a pipe, the other a tray in his mouth, squat gravely on other mats in front of him. A row of four wax candles, protected from the wind by glass shades, light up this singular exhibition, which, now that so little suffices to amuse the Parisians, nightly attracts a considerable crowd.

As may be supposed, the Petit Bourse of the Boulevard des Italiens has entirely suspended its operations, and the cabinets particuliers of the night restaurants are dark and deserted. Before the doors of the theatres there are neither carriages, nor noisy touters, nor jostling crowds. A few people will, perhaps, stop for a moment when some voiture drives

up at a slow pace and deposits a wounded soldier into one or the other ambulance.

And so the weary evening at last whiles itself away. At half-past ten the last lights in the cafés are put out, and the cafés themselves are closed. You walk home through the silent and deserted streets utterly regardless of the midnight robber who used to be in wait in gloomy portes-cochères; for you know that armed men are certain to be within call even in the least frequented thoroughfares. No footpad would venture to assail you in presence of the patrols of National Guard, which constantly pass to and fro whilst darkness hangs over the city; and your sense of security would indeed be complete were it not for the hostile intentions of the foe, whose proximity comes back to recollection as the ominous thunder of the cannon breaks the stillness of the night.

II. THE BILL OF FARE.

Like the Romans of the Decline, who summed up their wants in the phrase "*Panem et Circenses!*" the besieged Parisians in the month of November might have resumed their requirements in the words, "*Carnem, Arma, et Nuntios!*"—meat, arms, and news. The dearth of beef and mutton was self-evident. The Government, with whom procrastination seemed a virtue, willingly encouraged the belief in a want of sufficient cannons to enable General Trochu to make the great sortie which was to deliver the invested city; while as regards intelligence from the Provinces, it was not until the latter fortnight of the month that news both public and private began to arrive. One could, *à la rigueur*, put up without

either field artillery or news from home ; but the question of chops and steaks demanded a speedy solution for one's stomach's sake. Erudite journalists complacently reminded one of the terrible straits to which Paris was reduced in 1590, when the good King Henri—the same who on another occasion expressed the wish that every peasant should have his fowl in the pot—was besieging the capital with an army of Huguenots. In those days, we were told, the Parisians actually forgot what meat was like, and the only obtainable kind of nourishment, oatmeal gruel, was prepared in huge saucepans, which stood in the public squares and at the corners of the streets. The Spanish Ambassador had the bright idea that the corpses in the graveyards might be dug up, and their bones and skulls ground into a kind of flour ; but although this project was actually carried into execution, it soon had to be abandoned, as all those who partook of the species of bread made out of the powdered bones, perished most miserably.

The Parisians of 1870, to whom these stories were related, never dreamt of being reduced to such terrible straits ; still they were not without their apprehensions, and when, during the month of November, the daily ration of beef or mutton decreased to at first fifty, and afterwards to thirty-five grammes ($1\frac{1}{2}$ oz.) per diem for an adult, and to half that quantity for a child, it was perceived that the supply, although thus reduced to a minimum, must speedily cease altogether. Four thousand milch cows and a few hundred oxen were kept in reserve by the Government until the last days of the siege ; but already, on November 8, all cattle and sheep belonging to private people were requisitioned, and excepting in the case of cows whose owners pos-

sessed sufficient forage for their sustenance, the entire yield of the requisition found its way to the slaughterhouse. In these times the rations, small as as they had become, were distributed with shocking irregularity ; and although there was a certain amount of beef and mutton left, consumed by some person or persons unknown, yet the majority of the Parisians already had to fall back upon horseflesh as a daily article of diet. Already in October the Government had established a fixed price for the sale of viande de cheval, with the view of preventing any extortions on the part of the horse-butchers ; but ass and mule had been left on one side, and as they yielded a delicate veal-like meat, the latter became in great request, and was soon sold at 3s. and 3s. 6d. a pound. On November 13, the Government at length thought fit to intervene, and announced that henceforth it would purchase all mules and asses destined for public food, and that the flesh of these animals would be sold in each arrondissement of Paris under regulation, and in quantities proportionate to the population. Both mule and donkey were, in fact, assimilated to horseflesh, and on November 15 a uniform tariff for the sale of all three came into force, by which the filet was priced at 1s. 2½d. per lb., ordinary meat, best joints, at 9½d. per lb., second class at 7d. per lb., and third class at 2½d.

It was estimated by the Horseflesh Committee that on November 13 there were still 70,000 horses in Paris, of which 30,000 would be required for military purposes, leaving 40,000 to be slaughtered for food. By rationing the supply at the rate of 50 grammes (1½ oz.) per diem, there would thus be sufficient viande de cheval to feed the city during 100 days. At the end

of the month the Government took a census of all the horses, mules, and donkeys, in Paris and its suburbs, the owners of the various animals having to register them at the district Mairies, specifying at the same time to what uses they were put. Moreover, no animal was to be sold without notice being given to the authorities; and it was announced that any individual seeking to evade this decree would have his horse, mule, or donkey confiscated to the State. Many valuable animals were eventually slaughtered and eaten; but the butcher who announced "Thoroughbred horses from the Stables of Count de Lagrange" was evidently nothing more than a hippophagous Barnum. The gourmets of the day declared, however, that a slice of cab-horse was preferable to the most succulent morsel that could be cut off a pampered thoroughbred. The latter's flesh was invariably hard, whilst cab-horse was invitingly tender—as it naturally should be, having been well beaten for so many years. The acquisition of a joint off some ex-champion of the turf proved at times somewhat inconvenient. Thus we are told that the mistress of a household who was speaking with her cook, suddenly heard, in the adjoining kitchen, a noise as of bouillon boiling over. "Josephine," she exclaimed, "quick, see what's the matter, your pot-au-feu is all running away!" "Oh, I am not at all surprised, madame," quietly rejoined the cordon bleu, "the butcher told me that the meat was race-horse!"

During November it was curious to observe the aspect of the Halles Centrales—those magnificent markets which are unrivalled in the world. The immense pavilion which used to present such an animated scene on the arrival of the railway fish-

trucks, was now devoted to the sale of viande de cheval, with, perhaps, an auction going on in one corner, at which a few Seine eels or gudgeons would fetch their weight in silver. In the meat pavilion, where one used formerly to pass in front of miles of sides of beef and legs of mutton, only some sheep and bullocks' lights, and a few bullocks' heels, were exposed for sale; all the rest being viande de cheval. In the butter and cheese pavilions dripping and other kinds of melted fat, as substitutes for butter for culinary purposes, were displayed, together with honey and saucissons de cheval—encore du cheval! and toujours du cheval! One could promenade, in fact, for half a mile or more, in front of joints of horseflesh, growing small by degrees and beautifully less, from the entire side to the diminutive fillet. Of course no one could mistake a side of horse for a side of beef, but the horsesteaks—as regards the look at any rate—were hardly, if at all, distinguishable from the traditional "biftecks."

Still it was not merely horse that Paris was prepared to devour. All the animals of the Jardin d'Acclimatation, and even such of those from the Jardin des Plantes as men of science pronounced fit for human food, were sent to the slaughterhouses, and a butcher on the Boulevard Haussmann created quite a sensation by displaying for sale several bears, buffaloes, and bisons, yaks, and kangaroos, to say nothing of ostriches, cassowaries, and other members of the feathered tribe. Only the millionaires of the epoch could afford to purchase these more or less succulent specimens of game, owing to the fancy prices at which they were sold. Still people of moderate means were not without a certain class of

game at their disposal, for a salmi of a couple of rats could be had at several restaurants for a franc and a half or two francs. A rat-market which had been established on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, under the very nose of the Government, was plentifully provided with the raw material by a number of rat-catchers, who obtained admission into the sewers, and baited their traps with glucose, to which the rats, who live in thousands in the Paris drains, proved particularly partial. The rat, it should be remembered, was not a novelty as an article of food in France. Just as snails are reared in the vineyards of Burgundy for edible purposes, so are the rats which infest the cellars of the wine-growers of the Bordelais converted to alimentary uses. They are most highly prized, it is said, when killed in a state of intoxication; and to get them into the required condition of inebriety a paunch half filled with wine is left in the cellar, where it is certain instantly to attract the attention of half a score or so of rats, which, after having gorged themselves, fall an easy prey, and are said to be delicious eating. With reference to the practice of eating rats during the siege the newspapers reminded their readers that some few years previously a commission appointed to investigate the spread of trichines, presided by Dr. Delpech, and including the chief veterinary surgeon of the College of Alfort as a member, went to Germany to study the disease in the districts where it was effecting the greatest ravages. It resulted from their inquiries that trichines were not originally developed in the pig, as was commonly supposed, but in the rat, on which the pigs of Germany, running as they do at liberty about the fields, were in the habit of feeding.

Besides feeding on man's noblest conquest, the horse, the Parisians were also constrained to devour his best friend, the dog, as well as that favourite feline pet, the cat. The last named at least was no new addition to the Parisian cuisine, for even in the palmiest days of plenty poor pussy had frequently served at *barrière gargotes* as a substitute for the orthodox *lapin en gibelotte*. On the other hand, M. Francisque Sarcey indignantly protested against the practice of eating our canine companions, a climax which would, he said, have revolted even Ugolini. He declared that he could sooner understand Orestes eating Pylades, Paul devouring Virginia, or the Siamese twins feeding off one another. Hunger, however, knows no law, and in November canine and feline butchers' shops were opened in different parts of Paris. Skilfully killed, properly skinned and cooked, with a good sauce, the dogs proved excellent eating; their meat was pink and delicate, and by no means tough. Canine cutlets were sold at 1s. 8d. each, and leg of dog might be purchased during November at double that price per pound. It should be mentioned that far more cats than dogs were eaten; and indeed, after the conclusion of the siege, scarcely a cat remained in Paris. Invitingly set off with paper frills and coloured ribbons, the Parisian tabbies were displayed for sale, under the title of "gutter rabbits," and as such they met with many eager purchasers. Broiled and seasoned with pistachio nuts, olives, gherkins, and pimento, pussy proved a very dainty dish; and there was a great semblance of probability about the story of the woman detected stealing out of a house with a fine cat hidden under her shawl. "Oh, pray do not expose me," she cried in a plaintive voice,

"*it is for a poor sick friend;*" and indeed people in ill-health might partake of far less tender and succulent meats than plump tabby prepared by a skilful cordon bleu. Other anecdotes of the epoch were equally characteristic. Two good bourgeois, husband and wife, had a little dog of whom they were very fond. But a day came when there was nothing to eat in the house, and poor Bijou had to be killed and cooked. His master and mistress sat down to dinner with tears in their eyes, and during the meal the latter mechanically placed the tiny rib-bones on the side of her plate. "Poor Bijou!" she ejaculated with a sigh, "*what a treat he would have had!*" Less melancholy was the story of the English journalist who went with a friend to breakfast at Brébant's. The bill of fare included "sucking pig," for which he had always had an especial weakness; so he gave his orders in consequence. Having a doubt, however, as to the genuine character of this particular cochon-de-lait, he called back the waiter and asked him if it was a real sucking pig. "Truly," replied the waiter. "A little pig?" inquired the Englishman. "Surely," quoth the garçon. "A young pig?" persisted the customer. This last question floored the attendant, and he hesitated. At last he confessed that the animal was, in point of fact, a cochon d'Inde, a guinea-pig. As the writer asked his readers, are you equal to guinea-pig? Mr. Labouchere was not, but it would appear that stewed guinea-pig is really delicious.

There were many of the besieged who were quite unable to eat even horse. Of two of the author's acquaintances who did not take kindly to viande de cheval, one was reduced to bread and rice soaked in horse broth, flavoured with Liebig's Extract, which,

with similar preparations, was tolerably plentiful in Paris; whilst the other played incessant tricks with his digestion, and tried all the economical methods of satisfying hunger recommended by the newspapers. One day he breakfasted off boiled oats, and when asked a week afterwards how he felt, he protested that his intestines had been sore ever since from the husks grating against them. He remarked that by the time peace and liberty came round again, his digestion would most likely be utterly gone, and that he would be reduced to live on the *revalenta arabica*, that last resource of noble appetites.

Towards the close of November, such salt provisions as the Government had in stock made their appearance—their distribution alternating with that of the rations of fresh meat. It was believed at the time that vast quantities of salted provisions were in the hands of the authorities, but in reality there was not sufficient to have fed the entire population for ten successive days. Possibly the most seductive exhibition in all Paris, at this epoch, was that of a provision shop near the Place de la Bourse, which actually displayed three whole York hams in its window. Such a thing had not been seen in Paris for six weeks, and people congregated in front of the shop just as they are in the habit of doing outside Siraudin's bonbon establishment on New Year's Eve. At that epoch the provision shops possessed an indescribable fascination. It was impossible to pass them without looking in at their windows, in the same way that one looks in a print-seller's, and with far more interest, to see if there was anything new—ham, bacon, cheese, preserved meats, sardines, potted lobster—anything, in fact, to enable one to bolt one's dry bread when we reached the new

year. But alas! the spectacle generally offered to one's gaze comprised merely piles of tin cases labelled "Asparagus," "French Beans," and "Green Peas," with numerous jars of honey and pots of jam.

At periods of scarcity under the First French Republic, the Paris populace hanged forestallers on the lamp-irons; but during the siege, some forestallers saved the populace that trouble and hanged themselves. One marchand de comestibles, in an extensive way of business, committed suicide on being detected in possession of considerable stores of provisions, among which were nearly a couple of thousand hams which he had hidden in his cellars. On November 29, while the first great sortie from Paris—of which we shall have to speak further on—was being effected, and when rumours were current throughout the city that success had favoured the French arms, quantities of provisions, the stock of which had long since been supposed to be exhausted, were exposed in the shop windows of the dealers, and ticketed, moreover, at comparatively moderate prices. Towards the afternoon, however, when less confidence was felt in the result of General Trochu's enterprise, the tin cases gradually began to disappear, and by the evening had altogether vanished, the shopkeepers protesting that they were sold out completely. This explanation did not satisfy some of the National Guards, and a general search was instituted in the cellars of suspected tradesmen, resulting in the discovery of considerable quantities of secreted provisions, over which a guard was forthwith set, while the delinquent tradesmen were placed under arrest.

An intermittent raid, directed against the marchands des comestibles, had been going on in Paris for

several weeks previously owing to the statements made by a journeyman pork butcher who had been trying to dispose of a quantity of lard suspected to have been stolen, and for which he had asked 4*s.* a pound. On being arrested he gave up the name of his employer, who had closed his establishment several weeks previously, on the plea that he had disposed of his entire stock. A picket of National Guards, proceeding to search the latter's cellars, found them filled with preserved and salted provisions of all descriptions, which, in order that no disturbance might arise, were removed to the Halles after dusk—the dealer himself being carried before the Commissary of Police of the quarter, who detained him in custody. But now that Paris was beginning to feel the pinch of hunger, not only were dealers who were detected secreting provisions arrested, but shopkeepers, demanding exorbitant prices for edible substances, experienced the same fate; and a poulterer who had asked 2*l.* for a remarkably skinny goose was surprised to find himself taken into custody by the National Guard who inquired its price.

At the end of November, at Véfour's restaurant in the Palais Royal, a slice of game pie (nature of game not specified, but easily imagined) was charged 1*s.* 8*d.*, and truffled sausages were 9*d.* each. At the Trois Frères Provençaux, beef (?) sausages were to be had at 2*s.* 10*d.* the pound. At Catelain's, in the Rue Vivienne, a moderate-sized plate of so-called bœuf à la mode and fowl's liver could be obtained for 1*s.* 8*d.*; and at the well-known cheap restaurant in the Rue Grange Batelière, scraggy roast fowls were to be procured at 14*s.* each. Roast filet, professed to be of beef, was 1*s.* 8*d.* the plate. The celebrated

firm of Potel and Chabot were selling tins, said to contain beef, at from 12s. to 1l., according to their size; jerked beef was 1s. 10d., and salt junk 1s. 6d. the pound; whole hams being sold at the rate of 12s. and Cheshire cheese at 8s. the pound. Chevet, of the Palais Royal, who was selling roast ass's foal at 10s. the small packet, black puddings at 1s. 8d. each, and a small calf's head for 1l., asked 10d. the pint for milk, and 1l. the pound for fresh butter—of which rare and much coveted product he never displayed at a time more than a single pat, which occupied the centre of a revolving stand, and attracted the envious gaze of a continual crowd of admirers. At an establishment on the Boulevard Poissonière, "bœuf mode," as it was termed, was priced at 2l. 2s. the ten-pound tin; a small preserved leg of mutton was 1l. 8s.; a preserved fowl, 1l. 4s., and a quarter of a preserved goose, 17s. 6d. Poultry dealers were demanding 2l. 16s. for turkeys, and from 1l. 12s. to 2l. for geese, while fowls ranged from 13s. to 25s. Rabbits might, at times, be procured for 10s. to 12s. each; and now and then a small carp would appear at the Halles, and fetch well-nigh its weight in gold.

The scarcity of coal and coke has already been recorded. Firewood was very dear, and many people employed petroleum as a combustible for heating apartments. Paris had already run out of its stock of charcoal, so much used in the French cuisine, and accordingly a large quantity of wood cut down in the Bois de Vincennes and the Bois de Boulogne was transformed into charcoal under the auspices of the authorities. There being scarcely any butter or lard in the city, oil had been largely resorted to for culinary purposes, and this in turn becoming nearly exhausted,

people were compelled to fall back upon a variety of greasy compounds of a more or less repulsive character. No butter implied neither cakes nor tarts—albeit that there was a profusion of jam and honey; and the pastrycooks mainly displayed for sale mysterious patties, the contents of which none but those possessed of strong stomachs dared inquire. Some of these establishments, with the view of reassuring customers, exhibited a morsel of rumpsteak on a small dish in the midst of their dainties as a kind of guarantee of their internal composition; just as certain dealers in bears' grease used to display a stuffed bear in their windows to signify that they sold only the genuine article. At the grocers' there was still at this epoch an abundance of rice, sugar, coffee, and chocolate, as well as of preserved fruits and vegetables. Considerable quantities of fresh vegetables had been brought to the Halles during the earlier part of the month, by the "*chapeurs*," whom the Government had authorized to gather in all the market gardeners' abandoned crops lying between the French and German outposts; but after the massacre of November 19, near Bondy, when the sentinels of both armies shot down between sixty and seventy of these adventurous gleaners—men, women, and children—the *chasse aux légumes*, as it was termed, not unnaturally lost many of its adepts. On November 24, the Government took possession of all the stocks of potatoes it could lay its hands on, and at this moment the Irishman's favourite tuber was fetching 5*s.* 8*d.* the bushel, while cabbages and cauliflowers (very scarce) were 1*s.* each, small onions 4*s.* 2*d.* and haricots 1*s.* 5*d.* the quart. Bundles of green leaves of almost any description sold at the rate of 10*d.* the pound, for the purpose of making

“spinach!” Carrots and leeks were 2s. the bunch, turnips were utterly exhausted. Whilst as regards eggs, the last stocks left at the Halles were sold by auction at the rate of 21*l.* 2s. 6*d.* the thousand; new laid eggs—rarely to be procured—fetching from 10*d.* to a shilling apiece.

Of one commodity, and that the most important of all, there seemed to be no scarcity. In certain pavilions in the Halles, incessantly guarded by sentinels, one might see piled up almost level with the roof tens of thousands of sacks, tens of thousands of barrels of flour, which were, so one was told, but a fraction of an almost unlimited supply. In point of fact, however, the bread question was already seriously preoccupying the Government. At the meeting of the Council on November 20, the Minister of Commerce promised to have fifty mills at work within a fortnight, grinding the reserve supplies of wheat into flour. In addition to the stock of the latter product held by the Government he hoped to find a certain quantity stored away by the bakers. As a precautionary measure—for he did not think that the bread would hold out later than the 10th of January—he suggested that the sale of new bread should be forbidden. If stale bread alone was delivered to the public an economy of from ten to fifteen per cent. in the daily consumption would be realized. The authorities agreed to diminish the military allowance of bread by one-tenth; this proposal coming from General Trochu, whose previous suggestion that bread should, even at this early stage, be rationed like meat, was not adopted, through fear of promoting a panic. The Council, however, approved of his observations concerning the excessive quantity of bread distributed to the soldiers, who sold a part of

their allowance, and when belonging to artillery or cavalry regiments gave a considerable portion of it to their horses. This latter practice was common throughout Paris. Forage was indeed so scarce that it became necessary to give bread to the more valuable animals, if one wished to keep them alive. Several zealous citizens denounced the practice as a scandalous one. If, however, the horses were slain, all chances of fresh meat for the future were at once destroyed. On the other hand, a horse eats as much bread in a day as would support ten citizens, and it was asked whether it was worth while to keep them a month in order to enjoy a few hundredweights of fresh meat at the end of that period. The question was a perplexing one, and the Government was quite unable to take any decided action in the matter.

III. POST OFFICE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS.

Whilst Paris was completing its armament, drilling its citizen soldiers, manifesting at the Hôtel de Ville, clamouring at the clubs, and impatiently awaiting the arrival of the promised armies of succour, the Post Office officials were actively engaged in despatching balloons and carrier pigeons into the Provinces, besides examining multitudinous projects for a regular exchange of correspondence with the outside world, which inventive citizens were continually submitting to their approbation. During the last fortnight in October eight balloons left the beleaguered city, and of these seven alighted in safety;* the one exception

* These were the *Jules Favre* and *Jean Bart*, which started on the 16th of October; the *Victor Hugo*, 18th of October; the *Lafayette*, which carried Police-Delegate Dubost, 19th of October; the

being the *Vauban*, which started late in the day on the 27th of the month. At half-past four o'clock that same afternoon, when only at an altitude of some 250 feet, it was fired at by some Uhlans in the vicinity of Verdun, and the inexperienced aëronauts, being unable to rise out of range, voluntarily allowed the balloon to approach the ground, when three of the passengers threw themselves out, and were at once made prisoners by the German soldiers; a fourth traveller alone remaining in the car of the balloon, which being greatly lightened, at once rose again and went on its way. Among the prisoners was a young Englishman named Worth—a relative of the famous man-milliner of the Rue de la Paix—who had paid 100*l.* for his passage. He and his companions were conducted to Versailles to await the pleasure of the German authorities, and, despite the non-official intervention of Colonel Walker, Mr. Worth was sent as a prisoner to a German fortress, and there detained until after the war.

The first balloon to leave Paris during the month of November was the *Fulton*, which started on the 2nd of the month, carrying M. Cézanne, a delegate of Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce; and on the 4th two balloons set off—the *Ferdinand Flocon* and the *Galilée*, the latter of which fell within the Prussian lines between Orléans and Chartres. These particulars only came to the knowledge of the Parisians at a later date, for between the 25th of October and the

Garibaldi, which carried Government-Commissary de Jouvencel, 22nd of October; the *Montgolfier*, with General Le Bouëdec on board, 25th of October; and the *Colonel Charras*, which started on the 29th of the month.

13th of November not a single pigeon despatch arrived in Paris. Not merely was one without any direct intelligence from citizen Gambetta, but one did not even know whether the balloons sent out from the city had alighted in safety. Had it not been for certain stray English newspapers, which found their way through the German lines in a most mysterious manner, and for the information brought by M. Thiers at the epoch of the armistice negotiations, the capital would have been quite without intelligence concerning the outside world.

The pigeon which brought the first despatch received in Paris for three weeks was one taken out in the *Ville de Châteaudun* balloon, which started on November 6, and alighted in safety at Reclainville, in the Eure-et-Loir. This despatch, which, although sent off on the morrow, did not reach its destination until November 13, apprised one of the aéronaut's safe arrival at Vendôme, and of the fact that the enemy occupied Orléans and Chartres, with head-quarters at Patay. Its arrival proved, moreover, that carrier pigeons could perform their duty in November. There had been considerable controversy on this subject, and such a long interval had elapsed without news, that it was feared our feathered messengers could not accomplish their journey in the cold weather. Public imagination had been busy, and the most wonderful and terrible stories were gaining credence, when, on the 14th, another pigeon arrived, if not on the wings of victory, at least with victory under its wing, for the despatch it carried announced the capture of Orléans by the army of the Loire.

Meanwhile three fresh balloons had left the capital. The *Gironde*, which started on November 8, and

reached Gondreville in the Eure in perfect safety; and the *Niepe* and the *Daguerre*, both of which fell within the German lines, though in either instance the aëronauts were able to escape; the travellers by the former balloon being, moreover, able to save most of their plans and apparatus for perfecting a new system of correspondence, by means of which the imprisoned Parisians were at length to receive news from their families and friends.

With an aërial navy at one's disposal there had never been any difficulty in getting letters out of Paris, but the means of obtaining news from the Provinces were limited in the extreme. The question of navigable balloons had attracted considerable attention, and M. Dupuy de Lôme, former Chief Constructor of the French Navy, devised an aërial apparatus which many high authorities considered likely to fulfil the required purpose. His plan received the approval of the Academy of Sciences, and the Government granted a sum of 1600*l.* for the making of the balloon; but when it was completed, and ready to start, the inventor expressed a desire to see his place taken by another aëronaut. As no other aëronaut was forthcoming, M. Dupuy de Lôme's ovoidal machine, with its sail and its screw, remained riding at anchor. Various other kinds of navigable balloons were proposed; some with a screw, worked by gas or steam-engines, to which the danger from fire was very justly objected, and others with wings or several screws; while one zealous citizen, with a lively imagination, even suggested that the eagles at the Jardin des Plantes might be utilized to guide the vessels of the French aërial navy. A Doctor Guérin also proposed to maintain telegraphic communication between Paris

and the Provinces by means of a wire, paid out from a captive balloon to a free one until the latter reached the ground, the wire in question being maintained in the air by small balloons attached to it from distance to distance.

None of these schemes were ever realized; and to moderate the dearth of news, one had to fall back on the employment of pigeon messengers. Originally the latter were only employed to convey Government despatches, and to announce the safe arrival of some balloon in the Provinces; but in the month of October it was suggested that they might also, in a limited measure, be utilized to convey the correspondence of the general public. Eventually, on November 10, the Government issued a decree, by which the inhabitants of the Provinces were informed that they might forward to the Postal Delegate at Clermont-Ferrand, two kinds of despatches for conveyance by pigeon post into Paris. The messages of the first category were merely to comprise the sender's and recipient's name and address, and the answers "Yes" or "No," to four questions, such as "Are you well?" "Do you want money?" and so on, which had been previously asked, in letters sent out of Paris by balloon. These messages, the charge for conveying which was one

Trouville.			
M. X—			
rue —			
Yes.	No.	No.	Yes.
Y. Z.			

franc, were to be written on cards, which, when filled up, presented the aspect of the accompanying diagram; beginning with the sender's address and ending with the initials of his name. Being collected at the headquarters of the Delegate Postal Administration, the messages were copied on to a single sheet of paper, and

then reduced by photography to the most minute proportions, and sent by pigeon into the capital. On the arrival of these despatches the characters were enlarged under a powerful magnifying glass, and each message was copied upon a card, and forwarded to the person to whom it was addressed. This plan was, however, found to be very inconvenient, not easy to understand, and restricted in its use; and, accordingly, the second form of despatch which the Post Office announced itself prepared to receive was more readily resorted to. This was an ordinary message, comprising not more than twenty words, including names and addresses, and containing no public or military information. A charge of half a franc was made for each word contained in the despatch.

M. Steenackers, the head Postal Delegate in the Provinces, improved upon the system of copying the messages by hand, by having them set up in type and printed, previous to their being photographed, thus rendering them a great deal more legible. When reduced they occupied a piece of paper one and a half inches by one and a quarter inches, having the appearance of a diminutive journal of four columns. Longways, in the extreme left-hand column, were the words: "Service of despatches by travelling pigeons—Steenackers to Mercadier, 103, rue de Grenelle." The other three columns contained the messages, one following the other without interval of any kind. On the reverse side of the paper, the column corresponding to the one with the address was left blank, the others being filled in with messages as before. The accompanying

Service de dépêches par pigeons-voyageurs. STEENACKERS A. MERCADEUR, 103, rue de Grenelle.

diagram gives the exact size of the paper and its general appearance.

This novel system of communication was so great a success, that the very first day an office was opened at Tours to receive these messages, a considerably larger crowd besieged it than could be served; and three of the first birds sent off carried nearly one thousand despatches, estimated to interest no less than ten thousand different persons. Each message consisted of a very few words, nine-tenths containing less than ten, and the remainder not exceeding twenty. An arrangement, too, was made by which post-office orders, to the value of three hundred francs each, could be forwarded in a similar manner, on payment of three francs in addition to the ordinary charges; and photographic reductions of the *Tours Moniteur* and of the *London Times* were also sent into the capital.

The *Niepe* balloon, which left Paris on the 12th of November, in company with the *Daguerre*, falling like the latter within the German lines, conveyed M. Dagron, famous for the excellence of his microscopic photography, and three assistants. The authorities, being anxious to perfect the new system of correspondence, had contracted with M. Dagron to collect daily all the despatches for Paris, to photograph them upon films of collodion, to make a considerable number of copies of each sheet, to roll and enclose them in a small quill, and to sew them on to the tail feathers of as many pigeons as could be procured. The employment of thin films of collodion instead of paper, which had hitherto invariably been used, was a great improvement; for these films were ten times thinner and lighter than the paper, so that a pigeon was enabled



TRANSCRIBING THE PIGEON DESPATCHES BY THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

to carry an immensely increased budget of news with a diminution of both weight and volume. After various misadventures, M. Dagron eventually reached Tours on the 21st of November; but it was not until December 5 that he was able to begin carrying out his contract with the Government.*

On the arrival of a pigeon in Paris, the quill containing the photo-microscopic despatches was split open with a penknife by M. Mercadier, Directeur-Général des Télégraphes, and so that the films of collodion should unroll rapidly, they were placed in water containing a few drops of ammonia. Then, having dried and being enclosed within two plates of glass, the despatches were ready to be deciphered by the microscope. This mode of reading being very slow, recourse was had, eventually, to M. Duboscq's megascope, the electric light of which projected the films of collodion on to a large screen, so that four transcribers could work at once on different parts of the despatch-sheet; each square of which, when perfected by M. Dagron, contained some 1600 messages. Subsequently the happy idea was conceived of rephotographing the despatches on collodion on the scale of the original printed matter, so that each section was enlarged from the most minute dimensions to the size

* It may here be mentioned that, between the month of December and the armistice, M. Dagron produced 470 typographical pages, each containing 15,000 characters, or about 200 despatches; on an average 16 of these pages were contained on a pellicle of 1½ in. by 2½ in., and weighing $\frac{1}{100}$ th part of an ounce. Thirty, forty, and even fifty copies were made of each sheet, and sent by as many birds, some of which carried no fewer than 23 distinct sheets of despatches. In all nearly 100,000 of these despatches were sent on their way, but, unfortunately, the proportion that reached the capital, though very welcome, was small in the extreme.

of an 18mo page; the characters being in good bold type could thus be read off with perfect ease. The collodion film was, moreover, raised from the glass, which was in the way of transmission, and transferred to a sheet of black, oiled, or waxed cloth, dressed with gum arabic. Finally, the telegrams were separated from each other by means of scissors, and each person received his despatch in *fac-simile* of the original printed matter.

The first of the photographic despatches we have described—on M. Steenackers' original plan, as shown by the diagram on page 145—arrived in Paris on November 14. It contained two hundred and twenty-six private messages from all parts of France and abroad; and as, in many cases, persons residing in the same town had sent collective messages, it must have interested over one thousand families. The pigeon which brought it arrived about four o'clock in the afternoon; and by eleven o'clock at night the whole of the messages had been enlarged, copied, and transmitted by telegraph to the persons to whom they were addressed. A great sensation was caused in the capital by this event, and henceforward, day by day, thousands of imprisoned citizens looked anxiously forward to the arrival of some feathered messenger which might bring them happy tidings of those they cherished or perhaps—who knew?—

Some dolorous message knit below
The wild pulsation of her wings.

On November 17, a second batch of the impatiently awaited despatches arrived; and on the 25th, no fewer than five hundred came to hand. Entre temps one had received two official communications from citizen Gambetta, referring to the victory of

Coulmiers, and the occupation of Orléans; but the laconic yet cheery billets from one's own kindred did far more to lift up people's hearts than anything that the dictatorial and unvaracious Délégué à la Guerre could possibly write. The pigeon was looked upon as a sacred bird, and Paris shuddered with horror when it learnt that the cultured barbarians, by whom it was invested, had let loose a number of hawks imported from Saxony, with the view of intercepting the much prized letter-carriers.

It was only natural, however, that the Germans should seek to prevent the pigeons getting into Paris, just as they tried to stop the balloons leaving it. With this latter object in view, Herr Krupp cast some twenty so-called balloon-cannons, which comprised a platform resting on four wheels, movable in all directions, and from the centre of which an iron cylinder rose obliquely. In the upper part of this fixed cylinder there was inserted a tolerably short gun, having a range said to exceed five hundred yards, and movable like the platform. The arrangement was, indeed, not unsimilar to that of some large stationary telescopes. If, however, from time to time balloons fell into the hands of the enemy, it was certainly not owing to the destructive powers of Herr Krupp's artillery, but rather in consequence of some sudden escape of gas, or of the inexperience of the improvised aëronauts.

The capture of the *Vauban*, the *Galilée*, and the *Daguerre*, induced the authorities to despatch all subsequent balloons at night-time. From the 12th to the 21st of November there were no departures, owing to the contrary winds; but at 11.15 P.M. on the last-mentioned date the *Général Uhrich* ascended in the

midst of a thick fog from the courtyard of the Gare du Nord, and alighted safely at Luzarches (Seine-et-Oise) early on the following morning. The *Archimède*, which started at 1 A.M. a day or two later, eventually descended at Castelze, in Holland, while the *Ville d'Orléans*, which left at 11.30 P.M. on the 24th, was carried across the North Sea to Norway; the aëronauts alighting near the Lidfjild mountain, south-west of Königsberg, having accomplished a journey of 840 miles in fifteen and three-quarter hours. This perilous trip at least resulted in safety, but the *Jacquard*, which started from Paris on the night of November 28, was lost at sea; being last seen some five or six miles south of the Eddystone Lighthouse.

The following balloon, the *Jules Favre*—second of that name—which left at 11 P.M. on the 30th of November, narrowly escaped a similar fate. It was carried over the coast of Finistère, and was sailing across Belle-Ile-en-Mer towards the Atlantic, when one of the two voyagers on board climbed up the ropes and managed to open the escape valve, the pulley of which was broken. So rapid was the descent that both travellers lost consciousness. The balloon bounded like a wounded monster, tearing off the roof of a house—which, curiously enough, belonged to a brother of General Trochu—breaking down a wall, and dashing madly against an ancient church. Fortunately some coastguards had seen the descent and came to the assistance of the travellers, whom they found insensible and covered with blood. General Trochu's mother, an aged lady of eighty-four, was in the house, the roof of which was torn off by the balloon. She affirmed that she had been praying during the night for some sign from heaven that her

son would yet save France, and she had interpreted the noise of the crashing rafters in a favourable sense. She should rather have looked upon it as an evil omen; for although at that hour the defenders of Paris were camping on the conquered portions of Bry and Champigny, the fortune of war ultimately led to the failure of the first decided attempt made by General Trochu to pierce the German lines. It is of this first great sortie and its attendant circumstances that we have now to speak.

X.

"DEATH OR VICTORY!"

I. TROCHU'S PLAN.

TEN weeks had elapsed since Paris was first invested, and General Trochu's popularity was waning fast. Originally everybody had confidence in his military capacity, and his presence at the head of the Provisional Government seemed a guarantee that the defence would be vigorously conducted. During the earlier weeks of the siege, although many hot-headed citizens clamoured for sorties, the majority of the population was, for the moment, content to see that steps were being taken to perfect the equipment of the troops, to drill and discipline the Mobile and National Guards, and to augment both the rampart and the field artillery. Then it became known that the General had devised a plan—a wonderful, infallible plan—and everybody was on the tiptoe of expectation. People laughed over the possible contents of the General's will, which he had deposited, in prevision of the siege, at the office of a Paris notary; but his plan, although unrevealed, was fervently believed in. On the occasion of each petty sortie the excited Parisians wonderingly asked themselves, "Is it for to-day?" "Hope rising in the patriot's breast" was doomed, however, to constant disappointment. The stereotyped sorties invariably resulted in "a retreat in

good order," after some unknown object had been attained. Paris grew weary of skirmishes at the outposts, of wasteful cannonading from the forts, of General Schmitz's insignificant bulletins, and of General Trochu's vague, unrealized promises; and when, in November, there came a long period of absolute inaction, perplexity and exasperation seized hold of the entire city.

At the outset of affairs General Trochu declared to his colleagues in the Government—at least he has said so—that the defence of Paris, although necessary, would be "an heroic folly;" but in the published *résumé* of the Government deliberations, the expression is nowhere to be found prior to the 12th of November. Indeed, at the beginning of the siege, the General counselled resistance; and throughout those eventful times he was always in favour of prolonging the struggle; his multitudinous utterances, both public and private, evincing an apparent faith in the success of the French arms. Already, on September 9, when it was proposed at the Government Council that M. Jules Favre should sally forth and negotiate with the advancing Prussians, the General opined "that the best diplomacy was a good resistance, *which he thought possible*."* On September 13 he declared to his colleagues that "Paris was almost invincible," and a month later he again deprecated any negotiations with the enemy, remarking that the military situation had much improved. Two days afterwards, in a public letter to M. Etienne Arago, Mayor of Paris, he revealed, as follows, the existence of a positive plan to save the city:—"I declare that, imbued with a firm

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

belief in a return of fortune, *which will be due to the resistance of Paris*, I will not give way to the pressure of public impatience. Guided by the duties which are common to us all, and by the responsibilities that no one shares with me, I will follow out to the end the plan I have formed, without revealing it; and all I ask of the population of Paris, in exchange for my efforts, is a continuation of the confidence with which it has honoured me until now." What was this plan, on the success of which General Trochu so firmly counted? We have since learnt* that he had a vague hope that perhaps America would remember Lafayette, that England would recollect Inkermann, and that Italy could not remain oblivious of Solferino. Paris left to herself could not, however, in his private opinion, hold out longer than a couple of months; for the fortifications lost much of their value in presence of modern artillery, with which the Ile St. Louis could be shelled from Châtillon. He admits that this position, together with those of Meudon, St. Cloud, Villejuif, Ormesson, and la Butte Pinson, should have been occupied by the besieged; but to accomplish that object 100,000 men, and a delay of six months, were needed; whereas, in lieu thereof, the defence possessed no regular troops worth speaking of, and the time at its disposal was limited to thirteen days. Everything else that could be done to strengthen the besieged city was done, affirms General Trochu; and despite the disorganization of the forces which he had at his disposal when the Germans arrived on the 17th of September, he decided, after

* See General Trochu's speech before the National Assembly, June, 1871.

a consultation with General Ducrot, to make a stand in hopes of retarding, if not of preventing, the investment of the capital. Unfortunately, the raw French levies could not hold their positions against the enemy's powerful artillery, the position of Châtillon was lost, and the siege of Paris began.

The Governor's energies, according to his own account, were then devoted to forming a serviceable army out of the heterogeneous elements at his disposal—a task which was certainly fraught with difficulties. The troops which had escaped from the disaster of Sedan were utterly demoralized; the Garde Mobile was quite unprepared; the Francs-tireurs were so many free-lances, whom it was impossible to control. The sailors, the gendarmes, and the Garde Republicaine, whose numbers were extremely limited, were the only efficient branches of the service. As for the National Guards, their military duties had as yet been purely nominal. They had to be drilled and disciplined; and despite all the efforts made in the latter direction, it may be safely said that no satisfactory result was ever obtained. Moreover, an extensive system of miniature Committees of Defence burst into being in every quarter of the city; and these committees, with their pretensions to pry into military matters, to discuss, approve, or condemn at pleasure the various stipulations of General Trochu's organic decrees, soon proved so many nuisances, calculated to hamper the endeavours of the defence. It must not be forgotten that during the siege each National Guard thought himself a transcendent military genius; and in this capacity he considered he possessed a perfect right to criticize in detail every arrangement that was made. This spirit of criticism

was General Trochu's *bête noire*, still he could scarcely condemn it in public; for had he not made his own reputation by criticism? Besides, if the rank and file had lost all respect for, all faith in, their officers, he was, in a measure, personally responsible for this state of things; for his work, "*L'Armée Française en 1867*," of which frequent extracts were published by the press, had demonstrated, rightly or wrongly, that with a few exceptions every officer in the service was either a blockhead or a scoundrel.

Despite the difficulties attending the task, General Trochu persevered in his endeavours to form a well equipped and disciplined army. When the troops were quite ready, having received the "baptism of fire" in the various petty sorties which so perplexed the Parisians, they were to be utilized in carrying out "a very simple, bold, and practical plan, suggested by General Ducrot, on whom it reflected," we are told, "the greatest credit." When an army has to make an effort, the principle is to do so where it is not expected. That point in the present instance was on "the line from Paris to Havre by way of Rouen. The enemy's forces did not extend beyond Pontoise, and in one day's march his lines might have been passed, and the French might have reached first Rouen, and then the sea-coast. That was the motive for raising the numerous redoubts on the peninsula of Gennevilliers, and for the construction of eight bridges of boats. For the execution of the plan 50,000 troops were to march through Paris with a great show and make an attack from the eastern forts, menacing Bondy, while, at the same time, 50,000 picked men were to concentrate secretly in the peninsula of Gennevilliers, cross the Seine, proceed by way of Cormeil-en-Parisis,

cross the Oise, and thus arrive at Rouen. With the plan was connected a project for re-victualling Paris by the Lower Seine, and for that purpose the Government had ordered the formation of a flotilla of small vessels, and the storing up of a quantity of provisions to be in readiness in the ports.”*

Such then was the plan, in the success of which General Trochu so firmly believed. It was known, he has told us, merely to five persons, only one of whom—M. Jules Favre—was in the Government. This may have been the case at the outset, but it may here be mentioned that in the published résumé of the deliberations at the Hôtel de Ville it is stated that on October 22, General Trochu communicated his plan to the assembled Council.† On the following day he drew up a despatch acquainting M. Gambetta with his intentions; but the provincial dictator apparently took no heed of them. Meanwhile, General Trochu continued his preparations, and at the Council of October 27 we find him observing that “Paris may now have confidence in its strength. It is not France which will save Paris, but Paris that will save France!” On the 10th of November—long after Marshal Bazaine’s surrender was known—the Governor sent a despatch to M. Gambetta apprising him that he should make his appearance in the direction previously concerted between the 15th and 18th of the month. Everything was indeed ready for the projected attempt when the news of the victory of Coulmiers and the capture of Orléans arrived in Paris. “This victory,” remarks General Trochu,‡ “overthrew all my combina-

* General Trochu at the National Assembly.

† M. Dreo’s “Summary.”

‡ “Une Page d’Histoire Contemporaine.” Paris, 1871.

tions; for Paris, elated with the hope of receiving succour from outside, beheld in this success, not a fortunate accident but a certain presage of coming victories." The press and the population immediately demanded a sortie to meet the army coming from the Loire, ignoring that all the preparations had been made for an attempt by way of Rouen. "A movement of impetuosity seized on the public mind and could not be resisted." The members of the Government in Paris, as well as those at Tours, called on General Trochu to abandon his plan; and he had to comply. Later on, when he wished to return to it, the line was decidedly lost, for the Germans occupied Rouen, and even menaced Le Havre.

Such then was the fate of the original plan for raising the blockade. Would it have proved successful if attempted? Military opinion is divided on the subject; but General Vinoy remarks with apparent reason that "an operation in this direction would have been a very dangerous one; it was, no doubt, one of the quarters which the enemy had most weakly invested; but nothing could have been done unless the heights extending from Sannois to the cross-roads of Herblay had been carried, and held during all the time required for a large army to defile along a single road."* Moreover, at the epoch when the Governor of Paris proposed making the attempt, these heights were already strongly garrisoned and fortified with formidable earthworks. If in mid-November General Trochu believed that the German forces still extended no further than Pontoise, he made a very great

* "Campagne de 1870-71: Siège de Paris." Par le Général Vinoy. Paris, 1872.

mistake. Had he forgotten the thousands of troops set free by the capitulation of Metz? In point of fact, the enemy was already stationed in force along a considerable portion of the valley of the Lower Seine, which the Paris army would have had to follow on its way to Rouen. The Prussian outposts were several miles in advance of Mantes, those of the French being at Jeufosse, a small village below Bonnières. A march of more than two days', not of one day's duration, was necessary to get clear of the German lines. General Trochu was doubtless ignorant of these circumstances; but they must be mentioned to show what resistance his sortie would have encountered had it taken place at the time and in the direction chosen by himself and Ducrot. At a subsequent epoch, when he could easily have learnt the precise condition of North-western France during the first fortnight in November, 1870, he formally adhered to his original belief in the success of the enterprise; but it is evident that it could only have been attempted with advantage at a much earlier date than the General proposed.

As public opinion had pronounced itself in favour of a sortie in the direction of the promised army of succour, "which," according to M. Gambetta's illusions, "would bivouac on December 6 in the forest of Fontainebleau,"* a task of considerable difficulty, occupying some ten or twelve days towards the close of November, had to be accomplished—that of removing all the preparations for a sortie from the west to the east of Paris; for it was decided that General Ducrot should make a grand effort to pierce the enemy's lines and join the army of the Loire by way of the river

* General Trochu at the National Assembly. June, 1871.

Marne. This effort—the most important military event of the entire siege—must now be spoken of.

II. BOASTFUL DUCROT MAKES AN EFFORT.

On the morning of Monday, 28th of November, the Parisians awoke to find columns of troops marching along the principal thoroughfares, and batteries upon batteries of the newly cast heavy artillery moving towards the southern and south-eastern sides of the city—a sure indication that the great sortie, so often and so loudly clamoured for, was at length about to take place. Since Saturday night all the city gates just within the drawbridges had been closed pursuant to notice, and directions issued to permit no one unprovided with a special order from head-quarters to pass without the walls; the object being to prevent the exit of spies who might convey information to the Germans concerning the movement of troops inside the city. On the Sunday night the forts opened a brisk cannonade, and some unimportant skirmishing took place with the enemy in advance of the French lines; people fancying they saw therein the beginning of the end. On the Monday morning, however, all was silent outside Paris. The roar of the advanced artillery was stilled, while regiments tramped and fourgons rolled along the broad boulevards and avenues pierced under Baron Haussmann's auspices; excited crowds, meanwhile, gathering on the footways, and speculating as to what was coming. No one knew what the troops were about, for the newspapers had been forbidden, under pain of suppression, to make any mention of military movements or to publish any but the official bulletins of whatever engagements

might take place. In the evening, however, the walls of the city were suddenly placarded over with proclamations; one from General Trochu, calling upon Paris to make a supreme effort; another signed by the remaining members of the Government, recommending the population to remain calm during the approaching contest; and a third emanating from General Ducrot, who addressed the troops under his command in the following terms:—

“Courage and confidence! Remember that in this supreme struggle we shall fight for our honour, our liberty, the salvation of our dear and unhappy country; and if this motive does not suffice to inflame your hearts, think of your devastated fields, your ruined families, your sisters, wives, and mothers, who are desolate! May this thought imbue you with the thirst for vengeance, the uncontrollable rage which animates me; and inspire you with contempt for danger! For myself, I am resolved. I swear it before you—before the entire nation. I will only re-enter Paris Dead or Victorious! You may see me fall, but you shall not see me retreat. Then do not falter, but avenge me. Forward then! Forward! And may God protect us!”

It was midnight, or thereabouts, when the forts generally, supported by the advanced redoubts and the gunboats on the Seine, again opened fire, and with the exception of an interval of about a couple of hours to allow the guns to cool, the cannonading went on uninterruptedly till daybreak, when the field-pieces commenced to join in, and Paris, kept awake by excitement or by the roar of the artillery, was astir eager to learn whether success had already attended the French arms.

It had been decided that an army of 150,000 men,* provided with 400 pieces of cannon, and placed under

* According to General Vinoy, this army only comprised, in point of fact, 100,000 men.

General Ducrot's command, should cross the Marne near Joinville-le-Pont, and oust the enemy from his positions on the peninsula of Champigny, whilst a division starting from Créteil fell upon his flanks; feint attacks being in the meantime made on several other points of the investing lines. At the Government Council of November 27, decrees were drawn up appointing General Le Flô Governor of Paris in the event of General Trochu being killed, General Ducrot Commander-in-Chief of the armies of Paris and the Loire, should a junction be effected, and General d'Exéa to this same post, if General Ducrot fell. On the 28th, while Paris was still in a state of perplexity as to the precise direction of the approaching contest, Admiral Saisset with his sailors seized the plateau of Avron, an important position commanding not merely the roads between Chelles, Gagny, and Gournay, where the enemy was stationed, but also the Marne in the direction where General Ducrot's army was to cross. At the same time the feint attacks in the direction of Aubervilliers, Gennevilliers, and Buzenval began.

Ducrot's movements were to commence at daybreak on the morrow, but at five o'clock on the evening of the 28th it was discovered that the passage of the Marne would have to be deferred owing to a sudden rise of the water. No precautions had been taken, and the Saxons having broken down the dams, the bridges of boats by which the French were to cross the stream were destroyed. Forthwith General Trochu drew up counter-orders to postpone the feint attacks which were in preparation; but that addressed to General Vinoy only reached him at 8.35 on the morning of the 29th, and since daybreak he had been engaged in a useless and costly diversion on Choisy-

le-Roi and L'Hay, to the south of Paris. His army, composed of 75,000 men, had, after a bloody struggle, actually reached the second German line, and stormed the important position of L'Hay, leading to the valley of the Bièvre, when the news arrived that General Ducrot's operations were postponed. The result of this delay was most disastrous. Not merely was the enemy able to assemble an overwhelming force, which decimated General Vinoy's troops as they retreated; but he was necessarily made aware of the French projects on the Marne, and time was given him to defend himself, and to concentrate reinforcements on those points which seemed most threatened.

Nevertheless, Generals Trochu and Ducrot persevered in their enterprise. The bridges across the Marne being re-established, Generals Renault and Blanchard crossed the river with their divisions early on the morning of the 30th. Their objectives were the Bois du Plant, and the village of Champigny on the right, and the village of Villiers-sur-Marne on the left; this latter, the key of a plateau which extends to that of Chennevières. It was through a gap between the two plateaux, following the line of the highway and the railroad, that the army of Paris advanced against the German positions. "A wood on each side of the road was quickly occupied and cleared of its obstacles; the lines deployed so as to press round Villiers while facing towards Bry and Champigny. Then the battle began. Soon the French had their artillery planted on the summit of the ridge, with Villiers at their feet; but, on the other hand, they were opposed by the formidable German works of CœUILLY and Chennevières, which opened upon them. At the same time the German infantry began to pour in a terrible fire from the

shelter of their entrenchments, and this hot reception so startled the French that they hesitated and stopped their dash forwards. It was necessary for them to fling themselves on the ground; and those in the most exposed situations seemed as if about to retreat." At this moment the German infantry charged the troops of General Renault, and that brave officer was mortally wounded by a shell.

The gallantry and enthusiasm of the French leaders succeeded, however, in steadying their men, and the arrival of reinforcements also confirmed their resolution. Moreover, the artillery directed by Generals Frebault and Boissonet swept the ground in front, and soon constrained the enemy to remain on the defensive. General Ducrot, who had already had one horse killed under him, then led his men forward at a bayonet charge, and in this gallant sally he lost a second steed; but that portion of the plateau, in advance of Villiers, was carried, and the Germans were compelled to draw in their lines, and to concentrate above Villiers in a kind of entrenched camp. Meanwhile General d'Exca, with a third corps d'armée, had advanced to Neuilly-sur-Marne, and General de Bellemare's division, crossing the Marne at Petit-Bry, and driving the enemy back, joined the main body of the army in time to co-operate in the final advance upon the plateau of Villiers. "It was then three o'clock; a tremendous fire was kept up between the two forces for nearly two hours more, and then, light failing, the battle was, as if by mutual consent, stopped on each side; the French having the advantage of spending the night in positions which the Germans had held in the morning." Still the result was not complete. For the success to be decisive it was necessary to occupy the village of Villiers

and the park of Cœuilly. The enemy had remained master of both, and the movement of the French troops was consequently arrested. During the same day General Susbille advanced from Créteil, and captured for a time the positions of Mesly and Mont Mesly; a fresh diversion being also made by General Vinoy in the direction of Choisy-le-Roi, while there was a series of feint attacks on the North of Paris.

On the morrow, when General Ducrot should have resumed the offensive, he preferred an attitude of masterly inactivity. The day was passed in burying the dead, succouring the wounded, eating the provisions which had been brought out of Paris, and in giving the enemy time to concentrate fresh forces. On the 2nd of December, before daybreak, the French allowed themselves to be surprised, their outposts, from Champigny to Bry, being simultaneously attacked with great violence. The Mobiles of Ille-et-Vilaine and the Côte d'Or gave way, despite the gallantry of their officers and the heroism of their commander, who was killed under their eyes. General Trochu and Ducrot succeeded, however, in rallying the troops, and the artillery came to their assistance; but it was only after great bloodshed and prodigies of valour that the army succeeded in retaining the positions it had conquered on the preceding day.

On the 3rd, the French commanders thought it prudent to abandon the plateau, and to recross the Marne, the enemy not molesting them in their retreat, which was favoured by a heavy fog. That night the soldiers camped in the wood of Vincennes, General Ducrot informing them, in a proclamation issued the next day, December 4, that if, after two glorious battles, he had caused them to recross the Marne, it was because

he was convinced that further efforts would be fruitless in a direction in which the Germans had had time to concentrate their forces, and to prepare means of action. Had he persisted, he would have uselessly sacrificed thousands of brave men. "Far from aiding the work of deliverance," added the General, "I should have seriously compromised it, and at the same time have led you to an irreparable disaster."

That evening Paris learnt with stupefaction that the great sortie was a failure; and, curiously enough, the tidings were rumoured among a crowded audience at the Opera House, just as the orchestra was about to strike up the triumphal march of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*!

Some 5000 men of General Ducrot's army were hors de combat, including several hundreds of officers; and the losses in the various feint attacks in other directions exceeded a thousand men. Generals Renault and La Charrière, and Commandant Franchetti, died from the effects of their wounds; the first named being interred, in solemn ceremony, in the vault at the Invalides ordinarily appropriated to Marshals of France. On the other hand, some 800 German soldiers had been made prisoners. Their capture was the only tangible result of the enterprise. One of the reasons given for the retreat was the sudden access of cold and the want of warm clothing; for all the rugs and sheepskins of the troops had been left in Paris, and when night came on with a bitter frost, their want was severely felt. But the French generals were, moreover, persuaded—as is indicated by General Ducrot's proclamation—that, in this direction, the Prussian lines could not be pierced. Each of the formidable works erected by the enemy must have

been besieged before it could be carried; and even if the French had gained their object, they would suddenly have found themselves—with all their provisions eaten, and a great deal of powder burnt—in a district destitute of all resources, surrounded by enemies, with the possibility of the circle behind them being closed, and without any real hope of joining the Army of the Loire. Moreover, the want of precautions which caused the passage of the Marne to be deferred, and the inactivity of the 1st of December, completely destroyed whatever chances of success the French may have originally had in their favour.

General Vinoy is of opinion that, directly the difficulties of the enterprise became apparent (that is, after the battle of Villiers), the troops, with the exception of a division or two left under the guns of the forts to check or deceive the enemy, should have been withdrawn, marched rapidly through Paris, and thrown upon the German positions in advance of Versailles. The great concentration of the enemy's forces to the east of the city must have left these for a time very feebly guarded. The French, possessing the advantage of short interior lines, would have been on the field of action long before any German reinforcements, withdrawn from Villiers, could have arrived; for, to cross the Seine, they must have made a great detour by way of Villeneuve-St.-Georges. This, in General Vinoy's opinion, would have given the army of Paris a decisive start. "A few hours would have sufficed to enable the French army to leave its positions, to march through Paris, and to arrive at Versailles; and it would have followed the most direct and the shortest route. All the chances, therefore, seemed to be in our favour; and, though

the enterprise might have been a bold one, it would have been perfectly justified by our actual situation." At the same time, it must be mentioned that General Vinoy himself was far from sanguine of any decisive success attending this venturesome plan.

III. RUSES OF WAR.

While the sortie was progressing, the excited Parisians had assembled in crowds at the gates of the fortifications, and on the heights of Père Lachaise; in the first case, anxious to obtain information concerning the issue of the struggle; and, in the latter instance, eager to catch a glimpse of the distant smoke and exploding shells; but, after perching on the pinnacle of hope, one was now hurled into the depths of despondency. On December 2, while the Army of Paris was struggling to retain its dearly purchased advantages, the members of the Government addressed a fulsome letter of congratulation to General Trochu, little imagining that the failure of the enterprise was so near at hand. That same day, moreover, pigeon despatches from M. Gambetta and General Bourbaki arrived in Paris. From the first, one learnt that the provincial dictator had only received on November 30 General Trochu's instructions of the 24th, apprising him of the coming sortie, for they had journeyed to Norway in the *Ville d'Orléans* balloon; whilst Bourbaki's message, sent from Amiens, announced that he was ready to follow the Governor's orders. But all instructions were worthless now; the sortie had failed, and no Army of Paris would be ready to join hands with the troopers of the Loire or the

North, should they advance by forced marches to the relief of the invested capital.

And yet, despondent as the Parisians were, they treated with contempt—indeed, as a mere ruse of war—a letter received by General Trochu, on the evening of December 5, from Count von Moltke, wherein the great German strategist, with sardonic politeness, acquainted his Excellency the Governor of Paris with the fact that the Army of the Loire had been defeated near Orléans on the preceding day, and that that town was now reoccupied by the German troops. “Should, however, your Excellency deem it expedient to be convinced of the circumstances through one of your own officers, I will not fail,” the Count courteously added, “to provide him with a safe conduct to come and return.” To this epistle General Trochu laconically replied that he did not think it expedient to verify the circumstance through the means which Count von Moltke suggested; while the Government, in communicating the correspondence to the Parisians, added that, even supposing the news to be accurate, it did not deprive Paris of her right to rely on the great movement of France rushing to her relief.* The population, however, generally considered the news to be false. Some excited patriots were, meanwhile, revenging themselves for the failure of the great demonstration on the Marne by insulting four Prussian officers who, having been made prisoners, were allowed

* This correspondence gave rise to a debate in the Government Council, in which MM. Jules Favre and Picard were in favour of accepting Count Moltke's suggestion, so as to prepare the way for a capitulation; but this suggestion was opposed by the other members, and notably by General Trochu, who was eager to resist as long as possible (M. Dréo's “Summary”).

to go about Paris on parole, in plain clothes, and with 1000 francs given by the Government in each one's pocket. A hostile manifestation was made against these unfortunate Teutons while they were lunching one morning in a boulevard restaurant, and the result was that General Trochu exchanged them for four French prisoners of corresponding rank. Just as this incident was being forgotten, it was announced that there had arrived in Paris two pigeons with despatches from the Provinces. Considerable excitement and anxiety as to the news they brought was naturally manifested; but the authorities speedily informed the Parisians that these pigeons had been among those conveyed out of Paris in the *Daguerre* balloon, which had fallen into the enemy's hands, and that the despatches were undoubtedly apocryphal, as their text, which is subjoined, sufficed to show:—

"Rouen, Dec. 7.

"Government, Paris.—Rouen occupied by Prussians, who are marching on Cherbourg. Rural population receives them with cheering. Deliberate. Orléans retaken by these devils. Bourges and Tours menaced. Army of the Loire completely defeated. Resistance no longer offers any hope of deliverance.

"A. LAVERTUJON."

"Tours, Dec. 8.

"Editor, *Figaro*, Paris.—What disasters! Orléans retaken. Prussians two leagues from Tours and Bourges. Gambetta gone to Bordeaux. Rouen has given itself up. Cherbourg threatened. Army of Loire is now nothing but a mass of fugitives and marauders. Rural population making common cause with Prussians. Everyone has had enough. Country devastated. Brigandage flourishing. Horses and cattle failing. Everywhere hunger. No hope. Let Paris understand thoroughly that Paris is no longer France. People wish dénouement." (Signature, illegible, resembling that of Count de Pujol, or de Puget.)

It was well known to everybody that M. Lavertujon,

whose signature was appended to the first despatch, was in Paris, holding the position of one of the Secretaries of the Government, so that no doubt existed as to the spurious character of the message purporting to come from him. Besides, both pigeons being recognized by their owners as having left by the *Daguerre*, the Parisians unanimously rejected the news they brought as constituting a fresh ruse of war on the part of the enemy—indeed, as a stratagem to fix their minds on the certainty of eventual surrender, and so lighten the task which the German Generals had assumed.

Meanwhile, the besieged plainly demonstrated to the besiegers that it was possible for both sides to send false news. The Saxons were very proud of their early supplies of French newspapers, copies of which they were in the habit of forwarding to headquarters. One day, however, a *Figaro* was found on the dead body of a Mobile, and when taken to the staff, its information was discovered by no means to tally with that of other Paris papers obtained in a clandestine manner. To the horror of the Saxons, it was next ascertained that this copy contained an announcement that the Parisians had been kindly sending them for weeks past an edition carefully prepared for their especial benefit. After the failure of the attempt to deceive the population of the capital by means of forged despatches, confided to intercepted pigeons, this case of biters bit must undoubtedly have annoyed the astute authorities of the Fatherland. Henceforth they abandoned all petty schemes for deceiving the invested city. The Parisians were too sceptical for their purposes; so they resolved to circumvent their prey by more redoubtable means: the hour of the bombardment was drawing nigh.

IV. 'TWIXT HOPE AND FEAR.

During this month of December, Paris was swayed by the most conflicting sentiments—sometimes elated with hope, and sometimes drooping with despondency; now extending its confidence to the Government, and a few hours later bitterly denouncing the administration; at one moment looking forward to the speedy arrival of some army of succour, and at another swearing that it would save itself. One day the public mind would be concentrated on the great question of the Defence to the exclusion of all other topics; whilst on the morrow excessive attention would be paid to some minor incident of life, having no connection with the great problem of the hour.

It may be asked, what were the little children doing all this while? They were at school: for écoles communales and lycées alike had been opened at a very early date by M. Jules Simon, who, moreover, increased the number of hours during which the reading-rooms of the public libraries should remain open; and invited the artistic world to consult the valuable library of the Louvre—rich in works on Art—which had been closed against the public ever since the Coup d'Etat. Still in these eventful hours it is scarcely probable that many people profited by these reforms, though of course it was necessary to provide food for the mind as well as for the stomach. The latter was, however, in far greater request, and when, on December 11, some of the bakers' shops closed, for want of bread, at an early hour in the afternoon, a panic at once ensued. Was it the beginning of the end?

From the Hôtel de Ville there soon came reassuring proclamations: "Bread was plentiful and would not be rationed." Still in the Government Councils there was, in point of fact, considerable anxiety on the subject, for M. Magnin, Minister of Commerce, could only guarantee a supply until January 10; and he also thought that horseflesh would fail about the same date.* If, as yet, the Government dared not interfere with the consumption of bread, it had no scruples regarding the distribution of meat, and on December 15 all the horses, asses, and mules in Paris were requisitioned.

No one contested the authority of the administration, for the party of the Commune was apparently dead or dying. Partisans of the Red Flag still perorated at the clubs, but no one paid any attention to their utterances. Blanqui's organ, *La Patrie en Danger*, had suspended publication for want of readers. Major Flourens' pretorian guard had been disarmed for arrant cowardice in presence of the foe, and the major himself was in prison. Battalions of the National Guard had been treated in a like manner for a similar reason, or else on account of their intemperate habits; for if there was little to eat in these hard times, Paris had

* On December 8, M. Magnin calculated that Paris still contained some 46,000 horses, of which 26,000 were required for military and other indispensable services. Of the remainder, 7000 were to be placed as food at the disposal of the army, and 13,000 were to be served as rations to the inhabitants. On December 13, the Minister stated he possessed 81,500 quintaux métriques of flour, 200,000 quintaux of wheat, and 16,000 quintaux of rye, which would yield together some 166,000 quintaux of flour. In addition, he had a stock of 12,000 quintaux of féculas, which would be utilized. The daily consumption of flour was estimated at 6500 quintaux (M. Dréo's "Summary").

no lack of wines and spirits at its disposal; and there were many who endeavoured to conquer hunger and banish care by tippling at the cabarets. They preferred a "canon" of "petit bleu" or a dram of "tord-boyaux" to scanty rations of repulsive salt meat or mouldy cod and haddock. Fresh horse was very irregularly distributed; cat and rat—which the *Charivari* caricatured being tossed together in a frying-pan with the humorous inscription, "Enforced rapprochement of two belligerents"—were at a premium; and chocolate, rice, and Liebig's Extract were only within the reach of the opulent. Ah! if food had been more plentiful, one would have waited even more patiently than one did for the arrival of that succour citizen Gambetta so constantly promised, but which never came.

Farther off than ever did that succour seem when, on December 14, two pigeons arrived in Paris corroborating Count von Moltke's news of the loss of Orléans, announcing that Rouen was about to be occupied, that General Bourbaki was in retreat, that the Delegation of the Government had fled to Bordeaux, and that all General Chanzy could do was to keep the army of Prince Frederick Charles at bay between Josnes and Beaugency. Paris, however, still animated with patriotic fervour, was again subscribing for cannon, and presenting pieces of artillery to the authorities at the Hôtel de Ville in solemn ceremony, the stirring strains of the *Marseillaise* resounding on the Place, while from afar there came the thunder of the cannon of the forts. On December 16, the Government debated as to whether France should be represented at the Black Sea Conference in London. Citizen Gambetta had expressed himself in a favourable sense; but the Powers had declined to listen to any pre-

liminary conditions imposed by France—demanding that the integrity of her territory should be respected, and that an armistice with the re-provisioning of Paris should ensue. News from outside came to hand that same day, a courier, named Richard, with hundreds of private despatches, having arrived on foot by way of Rouen and the Seine, along which he had to swim for an hour before reaching the French outposts at Reuil. On the morrow a fresh despatch from citizen Gambetta was at hand, with the unwelcome tidings that General Chanzy, pursued by Prince Frederick Charles, was retreating towards Marchenoir.

Well might the Parisians murmur as they munched their bread, now made with bran, and getting browner and browner; but they strove to think as little as possible of all their contretemps, vainly hoping that the city might hold out for another three months. December 17 witnessed the departure of two balloons, the *Parmentier* and the *Gutenberg*; and here one may mention that there had been five previous ascensions: those of the *Volta* on the 3rd, the *Franklin* on the 5th, the *Denis Papin* on the 7th, and the *Général Renault* and the *Ville de Paris* on the 11th. The last named, of all the balloons sent out of Paris in December, alone came to grief. It fell at Herborn in Nassau; and, as a matter of course, the inhabitants captured both the aerial vessel and the aeronauts. This news reached the Parisians after the siege; for the moment they ignored the fate of many of the balloons. The army, which had lost so many officers in the battles on the Marne, was now being reorganized; and the population was looking forward to renewed action on the part of General Trochu.

But people did not merely die on the battle-field.

During the week that finished on December 17, 2728 deaths had been registered in the city—equivalent to an annual ratio of 72 per thousand; whereas in London, at the same moment, there were only 28 deaths for every thousand inhabitants. Paris, it may be mentioned, had a census taken of its population on this same 17th of December; the object being, so one was told, to ascertain the exact number of souls the city contained, with a view of the rations being more efficiently distributed, and of ascertaining how many pseudo-patriots had shirked their military duties.

At this moment citizen Henri Rochefort, of whom one had recently heard very little, appeared once again on the political scene. The *Lanterne* was republished with all its biting attacks on the fallen *régime*; these being preceded by a preface, in which the celebrated pamphleteer informed the world that if he had descended from power it was because the unworthy magistrates of the Second Empire had been left in tranquil possession of their seats on the bench, and in the enjoyment of their lucrative salaries. No other incident of interest arrested public attention till December 20, when a long-winded communication from the Government, after denying that it had ever withheld from the Parisians any news that reached it from outside, reiterated its determination to fight and conquer—a sentiment which did not seem altogether simulated; for on this very morning troops and National Guards were marching, cannon was rolling, and ambulance and transport waggons were lumbering through the streets of the capital. Another sortie was about to take place.

Early on the 21st, the Parisians, anxious as usual to catch a glimpse of the operations in progress, scaled

the heights of Montmartre, Bagnolet, and the Buttes Chaumont, where they remained for hours exposed to the wind, the cold, and the fog, straining their eyes towards the north-east front, from Le Bourget to Avron, where the battle was going on. The object of this sortie was to extend the line of investment towards the north-east, to seize certain positions commanding the roads which the enemy utilized for his convoys, and thus intercept his communications; and also to permit of strong intrenchments being made in advance of the plateau d'Avron, so that the positions of Villiers and Cœuilly—too formidable to be approached from the front—might, if possible, be turned.

General Ducrot accordingly marched against Le Bourget and Stains with three corps d'armée, but after some obstinate fighting he was forced to withdraw his troops to Drancy and the farm of Groslay; the naval division, which behaved with great bravery, having suffered most severely. General Vinoy, who operated on the extreme right, was more fortunate than his brother commander; he took possession of the important triangle formed by Neuilly-sur-Marne, Ville Evrard, and the Maison Blanche, thus commanding the course of the river and the high-road along which the Germans passed their artillery and transports. A diversion made on the west of Paris in the direction of Bougival, below the woods of La Celle-St. Cloud and Mont Valérien, completed the French system of attack. That night the troops camped in the open air as best they could, and the cold was so intense that no fewer than 900 men were frost-bitten. On the morrow, and until the 24th, efforts were made to fortify the captured positions, by means of barri-

cares, trenches, and earthworks, but the ground was as hard as rock, and the project being reluctantly abandoned, the troops were marched back into Paris.

They were utterly demoralized by the difficulties which had crossed their path. Twenty thousand men, says General Trochu, were suffering from anæmia, and several battalions of the Garde Mobile were—according to General Clement Thomas—with difficulty prevented from shouting, "Long live peace," as they re-entered the capital. Not merely, moreover, had the elements prevented most of the conquered advantages being retained, but the Generals in command had discovered that an attempt to pierce the enemy's lines in a north-eastern direction would be opposed, as on the Marne, by numberless batteries and formidable works.

Despite the utter failure of this second great sortie, the Parisians were not altogether cast down, although their sufferings were growing acuter every day. The weather had become bitterly cold, and firing was scarcely to be procured. Hundreds of trees had been cut down in the woods of Vincennes and Boulogne, and others had been rooted up from the public promenades, so as to provide fuel for shivering families. If anything, the poorer classes suffered more from the cold than from the scarcity of food. Queues were now formed in front of the charbonnier's shops and the wood depôts, and at the gas factories, where coke was rationed out. All the gas for ordinary purposes had been exhausted, and there scarcely remained sufficient for the balloons; so that people groped about at night-time with lanterns in their hands, or with little lamps suspended from their button-holes. In a few of the principal thoroughfares an occasional street lamp would

be found, illuminated with petroleum ; and petroleum also propelled the locomotives of the *Chemin de Fer de Ceinture* ; for the Government had requisitioned all the coals that remained in the city with the view of supplying the cannon foundries. No wonder that the shivering poor pulled down the hoardings, fences, and palings in the vicinity of the *Champs Elysées*, that half-frozen mortals carried off the benches from the public promenades, that in other parts of the city trees were cut down, scaffoldings carried away, telegraph posts removed, and wood merchants' stores pillaged by an excited mob, and that the furniture dealers, finding their ordinary trade so bad, hacked their chairs and tables to pieces, and sold them as firewood. Mr. (now Sir Richard) Wallace generously gave 8000*l.* for the purchase of fuel for the poor ; but large as was the gift, it was still but a drop in the ocean compared with the wants of the hour. The fuel panic was almost followed by a second bread panic ; for the staff of life was not merely growing harder and browner than ever, but also scarcer and scarcer. M. Magnin was however able, after careful calculations, to inform the Government confidentially, that Paris would be provided with bread of some kind or another until the 27th of January. With such great distress prevailing—when Madame Hamelin, the widow of a former French Ambassador to Constantinople, was found dead in her bed at Belleville, the victim of cold and starvation, when a thousand of our own compatriots were dependent on the British Charitable Fund for relief—how could Christmastide be merry ? What apparent chance was there of the New Year, now near at hand, proving a happy one ?

Boxing Day was the hundredth day of the siege,

and on the following afternoon Paris (which had meanwhile learnt that the Prince of Romanciers, poor Dumas the Elder, was dead, his heart broken by the misfortunes of his country) was informed that the enemy had unmasked powerful siege batteries at Raincy, Gagny, Noisy-le-Grand, Chelles, and Gournay, and was pounding away against the forts of Rosny, Noisy, and Nogent, and covering the plateau d'Avron with shells. General Trochu hurried off to this last position which, although a month had elapsed since it was seized by Admiral Saisset, with the view of supporting General Ducrot's passage across the Marne, was still quite unfortified. Not a trench had been opened to shelter the men; not an earthwork had been thrown up to protect the seventy-four cannon, stationed on the ridge; although this all might easily have been accomplished before the frosts set in. It is true that a few huts had been erected as sleeping accommodation for the soldiers, but these were worthless for purposes of defence. In presence of the enemy's formidable fire from eight converging batteries, the plateau was abandoned after 102 men were hors de combat, and a couple of cannon shattered. Paris was stupefied when it learnt the loss of this important position, and excited citizens forthwith demanded that General Trochu—whose many failures had, it was said, already provoked dissension in the Government Councils—should be replaced by a more competent commander. The psychological moment had now arrived.

XI.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT.

I. "NO SURRENDER!"

IN ordering the plateau d'Avron to be evacuated, General Trochu crowned the edifice of his own unpopularity. Not merely had he to face the murmurs of the disconsolate Parisians, but he had even tired out the patience of his colleagues at the Hôtel de Ville. Indeed, directly it became known that the sortie of December 21 had failed, MM. Picard, Garnier-Pagès, and Jules Simon demanded that the Governor should be placed under control; the first named insisting that General Le Flô, Minister of War, was in reality General Trochu's superior, and ought to act as such. At the Council held on December 25, MM. Favre and Picard dwelt on the necessity for replacing General Trochu as Commander-in-Chief, though it was proposed that he should retain the Presidency of the Government. On the morrow the Governor of Paris explained that if all the efforts of the last three months had failed, it was because the army was not equal to the task imposed upon it. Excepting the Garde de Paris and the Gendarmes all the troops were more or less demoralized. The Garde Mobile needed reorganizing. All its good officers had been killed; and, indeed, the army gene-

rally required rest and warm clothing. He (General Trochu) was, however, ready to resign if his resignation would prolong the resistance, and he accordingly asked his colleagues to confer on the subject with the different generals of the Army of Paris. When the Minister of War urged that with an army of three hundred thousand men and three hundred pieces of field artillery one could not capitulate with honour, unless a grand effort were made, General Trochu expressed a fear that fresh efforts were useless. He again repeated that the army was discouraged, adding that it accused him of beguiling the population with "military performances." He reiterated his request that the other generals should be convened to select his successor; but the Council, although several of its members had previously expressed their dissatisfaction at General Trochu's line of action, declined to "seize the bull by the horns" when brought face to face with a project of resignation. It was, indeed, unanimously decided that the chief command should not be withdrawn from General Trochu, and that he could not resign unless authorized to do so by his colleagues; but at the same time it was agreed to ask the other general officers in Paris to express an opinion on the situation. A few days later, M. Jules Favre presided at a gathering of the district Mayors of Paris, at which General Trochu was severely attacked; and at the Council of the 30th, the Governor, in referring to the municipal criticisms, mentioned that he could not make a sortie with the National Guard alone; that the army was now reduced to seventy thousand men; that there were twelve hundred frost-bitten soldiers in the hospitals, and that many others were suffering so severely in the feet that they could scarcely march.

On the morrow a grand Council of War assembled, comprising the members of the Government, Admirals Pothuau and La Roncière, and Generals Ducrot, Vinoy, Schmitz, Tripier, Frébault, De Chabaud-Latour, Guiot, Noël, De Bellemare, and Clement Thomas. After some preliminary remarks from M. Jules Favre, who expatiated on the desire for a prolonged resistance, which was paramount among the Parisians, General Ducrot declared that he had never believed in any succour from outside ; that he did not think any army of Paris or of the Loire could pierce the enemy's lines, that a grand sortie of two hundred thousand men, as had been suggested, would be an act of folly, but that one might try and save a portion of the army by forming three columns of picked troops and making a simultaneous attack in three directions. One column out of the three might perhaps succeed in forcing its way into the Provinces. General Vinoy thought that an attempt with two columns advancing in contrary directions ought to have been made, but in presence of the demoralized condition of the troops, he feared it was now too late. A discussion arising between him and General Ducrot concerning the battles on the Marne, General Trochu intervened, and recapitulated the history of the first great sortie, mentioning that the troops had been obliged to retreat after the sanguinary engagement of December 2, "*for want of sufficient ammunition.*"

Generals Noël and Tripier did not think it possible to pierce the enemy's lines, and Admirals La Roncière and Pothuau, and General de Bellemare were of the same opinion, the latter insisting on the demoralized condition of the troops. He stated that the Gardes Mobiles, from their commanding officers downwards,

shouted unanimously for "Peace!" General Schmitz, chief of the Staff, followed on the same side, and remarked that, even supposing the army did cut its way through the investing circle, it would find itself without provisions in a pillaged district; still he thought that honour demanded a final effort. General Frébault of the artillery declared that he was ready to march whenever called upon; but he entertained no hope of success. His colleague, General Guiot, was in favour of a formidable demonstration, to avoid the dishonour of capitulating without making a supreme attempt. General Clement Thomas, Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard, reproached General Trochu for not having more extensively utilized the citizen soldiery, to whom the execution of a "forlorn hope" attack should be confided. The Governor of Paris rejoined that he would follow this latter suggestion when the final crisis was at hand. "I said," added General Trochu, "that I would not capitulate, no more will I. At the last hour I will propose to you a final enterprise, which may become a disaster, but which may also have unexpected results. However, we have not yet reached the proper moment for the discussion of this last attempt." After these remarks, M. Jules Favre closed the debate, observing that no one had proposed a capitulation, but that every one was in favour of an active defence. As for a defence à outrance, a nation could alone undertake it.*

While these events were proceeding the enemy's batteries continued to throw thousands of shells against the forts of Rosny, Noisy, and Nogent, but they did comparatively little damage, though the fire

* "Enquête sur le 4 Septembre." (M. Dréo's "Summary.")

of Fort Nogent was eventually silenced for a day or two. The Governor of Paris had issued a proclamation alluding to this bombardment of the advanced positions, announcing that another sortie was in preparation, and denying that dissensions had arisen in the counsels of the Government! It was rumoured at this moment that he intended to convert Mont Valérien into a vast citadel, to which he might repair with the bulk of his effective forces whenever the extremities of the situation rendered his position within the walls untenable; but, in point of fact, the General had no such absurd project in his mind. The demands for immediate action had led him to plan another grand sortie by the heights of Châtillon and Meudon, and, these carried, to proceed by way of Satory, and turn the position of Versailles.*

The year of bloodshed and disaster was passing away, and many among the Parisians speculated as to whether the coming twelvemonth would bring peace and rest, or fresh woes and greater misery in its train. Although the thunder of the Prussian artillery resounded through the city the inhabitants scarcely imagined that the shelling of the forts would be so swiftly followed by the bombardment of their homes and monuments. Regarding famine, however, everybody knew that it must be approaching with rapid strides. All things susceptible of being eaten were turned to account, and on the morning of December 20, Castor and Pollux, the two young elephants of the Jardin d'Acclimatation, on whose backs in happier times Parisian children so delighted to ride, were shot by order of M. Geoffroy St. Hilaire. As it was feared

* General Trochu at the National Assembly, June, 1871.

they might show fight if missed at the first shot, they were carefully secured with ropes before the marksmen ventured to take aim. Castor was the first to fall, struck by an explosive bullet which broke a rib and, bursting internally, produced an intestinal hæmorrhage. Pollux received two shots, the first of which struck his right temple, the second sinking into his forehead and causing instantaneous death. Both animals were purchased by M. Deboos, of the Boucherie Anglaise in the Avenue de Friedland, for 1080*l.*; and on the Jour de l'An some of the gourmets of Paris were able to appreciate a dish of "filet d'éléphant au vin de Madère." The last day and the last balloon of the year went off together. There had been eight balloon ascensions since the 17th of the month, and in the case of the *Général Chanzy*, which started on the 20th, the aërial journey terminated most unfortunately, for the aëronauts, having effected a descent in the immediate vicinity of Munich, were of course arrested, and had all their despatches seized.

One hundred and five days of siege privations and anxieties had had a serious effect on the health of the Parisians. Certain sanitary arrangements in vogue in times of peace had necessarily undergone considerable modifications. A Commission had been appointed to watch over the public health, and to see to the disinfection of all refuse matter which could no longer be removed to a safe distance from the capital. Inspectors visited every house, calling on landlords and tenants to adopt such measures as were thought necessary to prevent the spread of disease; and yet, despite all the precautions taken, month by month and week by week the King of Terrors extended his ravages. At

many of the ambulances, and particularly at that of the Grand Hôtel, which was very badly ventilated, the wounded "died off like rotten sheep;" but of the loss of life which thus occurred Paris could only form conjectures, for in the published returns merely the civilian population was dealt with. Thus one learnt that during November there had been no fewer than 7444 deaths among the non-combatant inhabitants, whereas in the corresponding month of 1869 the total return was only 3863. Again, in December of the siege 10,665 deaths—equally irrespective of the military element—were registered against 4214 in the previous year. The last week in 1870 alone furnished an officially declared mortality of 3280 souls which, with the deaths in the ambulances, would have probably given a total of 4000. Now while in London at the same period there were but 1760 deaths, equivalent to an annual average of 29 per thousand, the Paris death-rate represented no less a proportion than 85 per thousand. The destructiveness of small-pox and the great prevalence of fever, diarrhœa, and dysentery were the special characteristics of the Paris return. Coupled with the fact that in twenty-two days of December the temperature was below freezing-point, one also noted the excessive mortality from bronchitis and pneumonia; and no doubt a considerable proportion of some 1897 undistinguished causes of death was due mediately or immediately to the action of cold and privation.

During the night of New Year's Eve the German bombardment of the Eastern forts and batteries increased in violence, and the Old Year had but another hour to run when the enemy made an attack on Bondy, but was driven back after some severe fighting. As the morning broke the thunder of the German

batteries became louder and louder, the shots succeeding each other without intermission, and it was amid the roar of artillery and with a leaden sky overhead that the grim, dark, chilly Jour de l'An dawned upon Paris. The stir, the animation, the boisterous gaiety, inseparable in ordinary times from this great Parisian fête day, were nowhere to be met with. You walked along the boulevard looking in vain for the usual crowd of well-dressed idlers and laughing children. Poor children! This was, perhaps, the very first day that they really understood that a barbarous foe had shut one out from the rest of the world. The few wooden shanties erected on the boulevard were but scantily garnished, and when the little ones cast covetous eyes towards the meagre joujous displayed therein, they had in more than one instance to be told that, as papa's office had been shut up for three months and the Prussians had turned his factory in the environs into a fort, there was no money to buy the toys they had been so fondly expecting. In the "grown-up" world very few étrennes were given; but in those instances where a gift was indispensable, bonbons, books, and jewellery were replaced by boxes of sardines, potted rabbits, and tiny bags of potatoes. All provisions, excepting bread and the restricted rations of horseflesh, had now reached famine prices. Brussels sprouts were 5*s.* a pound, potatoes 5*d.* each, and dried beans 2*s.* 6*d.* the quart. A horse sausage cost 4*s.*, and a pound of preserved filet de cheval was worth half as much again; while a friture composed of fifteen goujons, the size of sprats, was sold for 6*s.*, and the ordinary shilling box of sardines had sextupled in price.

During the earlier days of the New Year, while the

enemy's cannon thundered against the forts, several petty reconnoissances were made on either side; and at this moment General Trochu's plan for a new sortie by way of Châtillon and Meudon was submitted to twenty-seven general officers, and disapproved of by no fewer than twenty-six, who, in the event of failure, feared there might be a massacre of 100,000 men in the hollow about the Point du Jour. On the other hand, they were unanimous in recommending a sortie in the direction of Buzenval and of Montretout.* While preparations were being actively pushed forward for an attempt in the approved direction, the Germans condescended to announce that they would resume intercourse with the besieged by means of flags of truce; this practice having been suspended since December 27, owing to some French sharpshooters having fired on the German parlementaires who brought Mr. Washburne's correspondence to the outposts at Sèvres; for the American minister had recently been privileged to receive letters and papers from outside, and, thanks to this arrangement, hundreds of people obtained news from their families and friends—the system being to advertise in the *Times* newspaper, which Mr. Washburne regularly received. The non-arrival of his courier was therefore an unpleasant circumstance for many of the besieged. Despite Count von Bismarck's apparent willingness to resume the ordinary intercourse of warfare this result was not immediately achieved; for the Germans in their turn now took to firing at French flags of truce, and all parleys were again suspended.

* General Trochu's speech before the Cour d'Assises de la Seine, March, 1872 (action for libel, Trochu v. de Villemessant and Vitu, of the *Figaro* newspaper).

In the Government Councils the question of a Constituent Assembly was being agitated anew, and measures were also being concerted to eke out the remaining provisions during as long as possible. On January 5 a decree was issued forbidding the removal from Paris—from that date and during a delay of three months after the raising of the siege—of all cereals now in the possession of private people. The object of this decree—the penalty for infringing which was a fine of from 20*l.* to 40*l.*, and the confiscation of the grain in question—was to defeat the purposes of those who, despite the requisition of all cereals decreed on September 29, still kept back hidden stocks for purposes of semination—concerning which the Government declared it had taken the necessary precautions—and to induce them to give up their secreted stores of wheat, rye, or barley, at a fair price, to be converted into flour. On the day that this decree appeared, the mayors of Paris, alarmed at the bombardment of the forts, the increasing scarcity of provisions, and the continued inaction of General Trochu, sought an interview with M. Jules Favre, to whom they communicated their fears and their grievances. Conducted into the presence of the Governor of Paris, they heard him detail at length the various measures and operations concerted for the defence and release of the city, and they were apparently satisfied with his explanations, although, at the same time, he destroyed whatever hopes they may have retained of future deliverance.*

That same afternoon several shells had fallen—

* Evidence given in the action for libel, General Trochu *v.* De Villemessant and Vitu of the *Figaro* newspaper, Cour d'Assises de la Seine, March, 1872.

inadvertently or intentionally no one knew—inside the fortifications at Montrouge and in the Quartier Latin. While some of the Parisians affirmed that these projectiles came from the German batteries, others naïvely opined *that they were thrown from one of the detached forts whose gunners had probably made a mistake in taking aim!* Any doubt on the subject ceased, however, in the evening, when a proclamation, signed by all the members of the Government and placarded throughout the city, announced that the bombardment had commenced. But, instead of intimidating the capital, the enemy's shells would rather strengthen it, so one was told, in its resolution to fight and conquer. "Paris," said this glowing effusion, "will show itself worthy of the Army of the Loire, which has forced the enemy to retreat, and of the Army of the North, which is marching to our succour!" At a later hour, while the Parisians were discussing this fresh specimen of Hôtel de Ville literature, a second proclamation was issued, signed by General Trochu alone. However, we have since learnt that, despite its brevity, it was composed, conjointly, by the Governor, Commandant Bibesco, his aide-de-camp, and M. Cresson, Prefect of Police. Subjoined is the text of this document, which, of all the siege manifestoes, was one which caused the greatest sensation, its concluding phrase momentarily securing for General Trochu a semblance of his former popularity:—

"To the Citizens of Paris.

"At a time when the enemy is redoubling his efforts at intimidation, an endeavour is made to lead the citizens of Paris astray by deceit and calumny. Our sufferings and our sacrifices are being turned to advantage against the Defence. Nothing will make us lay down our arms. Courage, Confidence, Patriotism. THE GOVERNOR OF PARIS WILL NOT CAPITULATE!"

II. PARIS BOMBARDED.

General Trochu had apparently nailed his colours to the mast, and meant to sink with the sinking ship. The promise that he would not capitulate revived for a while the fast fading hopes of the middle classes ; and even the all but extinguished confidence of the prolétariat flickered an instant, as if unwilling to forsake for ever the man who but a few months previously had enjoyed unbounded popularity. Various circumstances testified to the existence of this momentary return of favour, and although a self-constituted Communist committee, profiting by the thunder of the bombardment, launched a formal indictment of the Government of National Defence—significantly printed on red paper, and placarded all over the capital—the lower classes could not be persuaded to repeat the adventure of October 31, by again marching on the Hôtel de Ville. A few hundred citizens assembled on the Place du Château d'Eau and tried to provoke a manifestation ; but, meeting with no encouragement from the general public, they had to abandon their designs. The authorities announced their intention of bringing the authors of the "Affiche Rouge" to book, but the majority of the population paid little heed to these incidents, being preoccupied with the unusual spectacle of the "holy city" under shells. Citizen Edgar Quinet rushed to the rescue with an oracular manifesto, in which he declared that the bombardment of Paris was a "grand moral victory for France;" and Edmond About and other notable journalists indulged in a certain amount of high-flown writing, with the view of imbuing their compatriots with fortitude. The fresh trial embodied,

however, its own stimulant, and the Parisians, well-nigh worn out with *tædium vitæ*, brightened up and put on a bolder front than ever, when the German shells first made their appearance inside the city.

It was on the afternoon of January 5 that the first of the enemy's projectiles fell in the Rue Lalande in the Quartier du Maine, a turner who was at work in his shop being wounded by one of the exploding fragments. The clock tower of the Mairie of the 14th arrondissement was the enemy's original objective, and soon the shells began to fall in considerable numbers round about the municipal edifice. As the night drew in the cannonade became more intense, and the range of the hostile artillery seemed gradually to expand—one shell bursting in the Rue Gay-Lussac on a line with the Pantheon, and others exploding in the Normal School in the Rue d'Ulm. Tombs were shattered in the Montparnasse cemetery, and trees were torn up by fresh bolts that came flying through the garden of the Luxembourg. Westward, the neighbourhood of the Point du Jour was assailed, but here the defenders of the ramparts defiantly hoisted the tricolour, and resolutely remained at their post as the iron missiles, darting past them through the air, fell, all hissing and sputtering, into the cold Seine—now raising clouds of spray, and now smashing the ice-blocks obstructing the stream. During this first night of the bombardment twenty-six houses were seriously damaged; five persons were killed and five wounded.

On the morrow the shells came plunging in anew; falling mostly in the Quartier Latin round about the Observatory, the result being that four persons were killed and six wounded. While the Parisians hailed the exploding projectiles with shouts

of "Vive la France!" "Vive Paris!" while the gamins laughed and clapped their hands with glee, delighted with what they considered a new form of amusement, wild rumours were in circulation—General Faidherbe was at Creil with 90,000 men; Von der Tann was dead, and Prince Frederick Charles mortally wounded; his army, moreover, being destroyed. Advantages such as these might well compensate for the trials of a passing bombardment which did not seem likely to inflict much damage. Having correctly ascertained the range of their artillery, the Germans began by opening fire at ten o'clock at night, and as a rule continued shelling the beleaguered city until daybreak. They fancied, one was told, that a thundering cannonade by moonlight, with a constant succession of exploding shells bearing destruction right and left at an hour when honest folks are abed, would suffice to fill the Parisians with terror, and lead to a speedy capitulation. If they did cultivate this pleasing idea they were soon undeceived. The crashing and smashing of the German projectiles at dead of night failed to intimidate the Parisians to the required degree; and so there followed an almost incessant bombardment both by daylight and after dark.

As the sun rose beyond Bondy, slowly dispersing the cold grey morning mist; when it beamed forth at mid-day, illuminating the gilded dome of the Invalides and the equally gilded Phœbus of the new Opera House; as it sank to rest, tinging the sky with faint crimson streaks behind the heights of Meudon; when night had fallen, and the stars twinkled and the moon shone above the ice-bound Seine, still and ever Herr Krupp's messengers of death sped on their course from the German batteries commanding the

southern side of the capital. On they came, with a whizz and whirr, frequently at the rate of a hundred an hour, at times failing to explode, but more frequently bursting with a loud report. Now falling in the streets, they scattered the promenaders and—miracle of miracles!—caused even the fagged ill-fed horses to bolt. Down on their stomachs went men and women, no matter how stylishly attired, or how dirty the ground might be; while venturesome gamins crouched close to the exploding projectiles, with handkerchiefs or cloths, ready to enwrap such fragments as could be secured, for sale as “*Souvenirs du Siège*.” Then there were others of these iron missiles which plunged with a crash through the house-roofs, now bursting in bedrooms, whose tired inmates would have preferred a softer lullaby than Moltke’s music, and now exploding in *salles-à-manger* while families were partaking of some meagre meal. The doughty drinkers in the cabarets complacently breathing words of defiance, received moreover, at times, a very practical answer to their menaces in the shape of some Prussian projectile darting into their midst.

Throughout the *arrondissements* on the left bank of the Seine—likened not inappropriately to some huge rabbit warren, which, after the sportsman’s first shot, shows no signs of life, and where, from the deserted state of the streets, one could almost fancy oneself in a plague-stricken city—broken cornices, shattered balconies, demolished chimney-stacks, and shivered window-panes were plentiful enough. As a special correspondent wrote—“The few foot passengers who ventured on this dangerous ground walked with a quicker step, sidling along the walls with their heads bent forward, as if anxious to avoid

being stopped on any pretext, and to reach a neighbourhood where they could breathe freely." Now and again the roofs and walls of the houses were pierced with gaping holes—mementoes of the forcible ingress of some flying bolt, which, entire or in fragments, enfiladed half a dozen successive partitions, and thus journeyed at will through all the apartments of the flat it favoured with its visit. At times, also, some splinter would dart aloft and bring down the ceiling in its flight; at others, it would dive below and precipitate the flooring into space. In many instances, however, the erratic projectiles astonished one far more by their freaks of clemency than by the ravages they caused. An infant sleeping in its cradle would be left unharmed in a chamber otherwise devastated by an exploding shell—where, in fact, not an article of furniture, save baby's *berceaunette*, remained entire. In another room the rebounding fragments would smash into a thousand microscopic pieces a number of nicknacks stored in cupboards, or hidden away in dim corners, and leave untouched, unscarred, in fact immaculate, a vase, a lamp, or a casket standing in full view of a window, shattered by the unsolicited visitor.

As the bombardment now promised to be serious, scores of families—not merely those domiciled in the cannon-aded quarters, but even the more timorous of those living in districts utterly beyond the range of the enemy's artillery—sought shelter in their cellars, whither they conveyed their mattresses, pillows, cooking utensils, and such scanty provisions as they could collect. Huddled together in these subterranean abodes, destitute of air, and dimly lighted with petroleum lamps, life became well-nigh insupportable. To avoid such an

unpleasant existence with the possible contingency of being buried alive beneath the ruins of some shattered house, many people residing in those parts of the town where the shells fell thickest abandoned their homes altogether, and found a refuge across the Seine, in a less threatened neighbourhood.

The German missiles in their promiscuous course disregarded all international treaties, all social understandings. The flag of the Geneva Convention might wave above hospitals and ambulances, but the iron bolts never heeded its presence. The hospitals Neckar, La Pitié, and the Val-de-Grâce were shelled. The bombs burst in the hospital for sick children and in the asylum for the youthful blind—five of whose innocent occupants were killed. No respect was shown either for the Gobelins or for the Jardin des Plantes. The Serres du Muséum, those matchless conservatories and hot-houses replete with precious *flora*, were destroyed. While one projectile carried havoc and dismay into the Salpêtrière, among the insane and infirm old women, its inmates, another struck the Convent du Sacré Cœur, where the youthful daughters of the noble faubourg complete their education; and a third exploded in the prison of Ste. Pélagie, where free-spoken journalists and opposition politicians have so often been confined. The towers of St. Sulpice offered a convenient target for the marksmen of the Fatherland, and even those of Notre Dame de Paris—though farther removed—were all but struck by several of the missiles which exploded in its immediate vicinity.

Over and over again too did the enemy's fire converge on the dome of the Pantheon, for it would appear that the Germans had an idea that the "Temple of Immortality" had been converted into a powder

magazine. But this impression was, in point of fact, erroneous. As the shells fell round about the building, which they seldom struck, the priests continued celebrating Mass, and hundreds of women and scores of men knelt before the high altar—praying that Ste. Geneviève would, as in days of yore, again deliver Paris from the northern foe. At night-time it would necessarily have been difficult to avoid shelling the hospitals and the religious edifices, but in the daylight the Germans might at least have abstained from selecting those buildings as their favourite targets. And it is impossible to deny but that such was the case; for, although the projectiles fell alike on hospitals and schools, ambulances and slaughterhouses, churches and barracks, prisons and convents, together with private houses innumerable, those buildings where the sick and wounded were tended, and where the faithful prayed, were the most persistently shelled and the most grievously damaged. Protestations from the Government, the Corps Diplomatique, men of science and men of letters, were issued all in vain.

When General Trochu complained of these proceedings to Von Moltke, the strategical Sphinx replied, with grim sarcasm, that the fog and the distance had prevented the German gunners from taking aim with proper precision, but that as the batteries of the Fatherland approached, as was projected, closer and closer to the beleaguered city, it would doubtless be possible to point the cannon with more discrimination. It was after the receipt of this answer that one of the members of the Government, whose name has not been preserved for the edification of posterity, suggested, in open council at the Hôtel de Ville, that all the German prisoners in Paris should be confined

in those buildings most frequently damaged by the bombardment.* An adverse vote greeted this proposal; the promoter of which seemingly forgot the colloquial adage, that "two wrongs never make one right."

Of course there was considerable exaggeration respecting the damage done by the enemy's projectiles; and the newspapers were full of incidents, more or less veracious. On one occasion a journal announced that a shell had fallen into a monastery in the Rue Oudinot, and had killed ten children, "whose palpitating flesh was pasted against the wall of the dormitory." The fact was, that a shell, having fallen in the garden where sixteen brothers were cutting down some trees, burst and wounded no one, showing itself more merciful than a projectile which exploded about the same time in the Rue Soufflot, killing five men on the spot. Another day it was reported that a shell had fallen through the roof of St. Sulpice while the priest was officiating; no one was hurt, but the curé begged the faithful to depart, and he remained at his post, walking up and down the aisle like a sea captain pacing his deck in the midst of a tempest.

The victims of the bombardment between the 5th and 17th of January were 288 in number, of whom 81 were killed and 207 wounded. The greatest loss of life occurred on the night of the 8th of January, when the 900 shells thrown by the Germans into the city from 9 P.M. till 5 A.M. (a fresh projectile falling every two minutes in the district round about the Odéon) killed 22 people, besides wounding no fewer than 37. On the following night, when several ambulances were visited

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

by the enemy's projectiles, 12 people were killed and 36 wounded; and from the 14th to the 15th of January 14 deaths and 17 cases of injury were recorded. The victims of the bombardment were by Government decree assimilated to soldiers killed or wounded on the battle-field, with the usual pecuniary advantages to widows and orphans in instances of death. Out of some sixty children struck by exploding shells, nearly half were killed on the spot, and several of the remainder subsequently died. Over and over again the remains of some innocent infant, slain by the missiles of the modern Herod, as King William was now entitled, were escorted to their last resting-place by a cortège of indignant citizens. A public funeral was given at Notre Dame des Champs to four little boys, pupils at the college of the Rue de Vaugirard who, after the fashion of the wounded killed in their beds at the Val-de-Grâce, were immolated in their sleep by a shell which burst in their dormitory. M. Jules Favre accompanied the procession to the Montparnasse cemetery, where, standing beside the open graves, he spoke a few words of grief and consolation.

Some hundreds of buildings, public and private, struck and more or less damaged, but only irreparably destroyed in one instance—that of the Serres du Muséum; several fires ignited and promptly extinguished; 288 human victims killed or wounded, such was the result of twelve days' bombardment. Scarcely an excessive one compared with the violence of the enemy's fire, the weight of his projectiles, at times, no less than 190 lbs. avoirdupois, and the abundance of wealth, treasure, and human life within range of his batteries. As was remarked at the epoch, so far as the mortality of Paris was concerned, there

were ten chances in favour of one's dying by the small-pox against one in favour of being killed by a shell. The return from the 7th to the 13th of January, inclusive, showed an augmentation upon that of the previous week of more than 300 deaths. Between 60 and 70 people died from small-pox every day, and the ravages of bronchitis and pneumonia were ever on the increase. The return for the week was close upon 4000 deaths, and in this return were not included the wounded who died in public hospitals and ambulances. The number of the latter could not be accurately ascertained, but experienced physicians estimated them at one hundred per diem; so that there was a weekly mortality of 4700 souls in a population of little more than two millions.

While the bombardment was progressing there was no dearth of the ordinary incidents of siege life, such as the Parisians had experienced during the preceding months. On January 8 there came to the Hôtel de Ville despatches from citizen Gambetta and General Faidherbe, the former declaring, with all the assurance of a man who can perceive the mote in his brother's eye if he cannot see the beam in his own, that although the Germans had not been defeated they were at all events demoralized; while the latter announced to imprisoned Paris that he had gained a victory at Bapaume. Two days later there came to hand a fresh despatch from citizen Gambetta, in which the Dictator of Bordeaux bitterly complained of General Bourbaki's line of action. The Governor of Paris declared, however, to his colleagues that, personally, the only provincial general in whom he had the slightest confidence was precisely the said General Bourbaki. He declined to place his trust in

either Chanzy or Faidherbe;* and yet Paris was still rejoicing over the latter's victory at Bapaume, concerning which fresh particulars came to hand a few days later, when some German newspapers found their way into the city.

Communications with outside were still being kept up by means of carrier pigeons and balloons; and during the first fortnight of January seven vessels of the aerial navy were despatched into the provinces. Gas was, however, becoming extremely scarce, and a fresh supply was quite out of the question; for on January 16 it was declared at the Government Council that there were no coals left—not even for the State workshops. On the other hand, the pigeon despatches were growing rarer and rarer, and it was in vain that the Post Office authorities sought to organize some more successful system of communication. Already in December a trio of inventive individuals proposed to send into Paris by way of the Seine a number of letters enclosed in zinc spheres, furnished with fins, and floating between two waters.† Week after week the river was fruitlessly dragged in hope that some of these subaqueous messengers would come to hand; and at the beginning of January the authorities listened to the proposals of five adventurers, who suggested that an attempt should be made to pass

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

† After the conclusion of the Armistice, some 800 letters enclosed in three zinc balls reached Paris. It is supposed that the river locks, constantly kept closed during the siege, prevented their earlier arrival. In June, 1871, one of these spheres, filled with correspondence in a perfect state of preservation, was found on the sea-shore at Ste. Marie-du-Mont, not far from Cherbourg.

through the enemy's lines by the subterranean quarries on the left bank of the Seine, which might be utilized to establish regular communication with outside. This scheme having failed, it was again proposed to send despatches into the capital by way of the river—this time in little globular balls of glass imitating water bubbles, and a number of these crystal vessels having been taken out of Paris in a balloon, an attempt was about to be made, when the river froze, and this ingenious mode of transport, which presented several chances of success, had to be abandoned. For the same reason M. Deleute's submarine boat was never utilized. Next came an attempt to send letters into the capital by means of dogs, much after the manner in which tobacco is smuggled across the Belgian frontier, and M. Hurel took five chiens de bouvier out of Paris in the car of the *Général Faidherbe* balloon (January 13). Notice was given to the French advanced posts not to hurt these animals should any of them present themselves, but they apparently never passed through the German lines, and any despatches or letters they may have carried fell into the enemy's possession.

It was through the medium of Mr. Washburne, whose facilities of communication with the outside world have already been spoken of,* that the Government was able to correspond with Earl Granville on the subject of the Black Sea Conference. M. Jules Favre apparently considered the invitation which the English Foreign Minister sent him to attend this diplomatic gathering as a virtual recognition of the Republic by Great Britain; and he felt that

* See *ante*, p. 189.

“the Government of National Defence would commit a grave fault in rejecting the overture which was made to it.” But then came the bombardment, and at the Government Council of January 9 it was decided, after a long debate, to postpone all decision on the subject until the Germans had ceased shelling Paris. On the 11th this resolution was confirmed; but subsequently—the why and wherefore of the change are not apparent, for M. Dréo’s “Summary” is silent on the subject—M. Favre applied to Count Bismarck for a safe conduct, which was refused, owing to the form of the demand, for this implied that the National Defence was the legal Government of France—a presupposition which the German Chancellor emphatically declined to entertain. Having suggested that possibly a compromise on the point might be arrived at, by which the scruples of Germany might be allayed and every prejudice arising from M. Favre’s presence in London be avoided, Count Bismarck concluded his reply in the following sarcastic vein:—

“But, even if such a plan can be discovered, allow me to ask if it be advisable that your Excellency should leave Paris, and your post as a member of the Government there, in order personally to take part in a Conference about the Black Sea, at a moment when interests are at stake in Paris which are more important for France and Germany than Article XI. of the Treaty of 1856? Your Excellency would also leave behind in Paris the diplomatic agents and subjects of neutral States who have remained, or rather have been detained there, long after they had received permission to pass through the German lines, and who are, therefore, so much the more under the protection and care of your Excellency as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government *de facto*.

“I can, therefore, scarcely suppose that your Excellency, in the critical position of affairs in the establishment of which you so materially assisted, will deprive yourself of the possibility of helping to effect a solution, the responsibility of which rests upon you.”

The military operations of the first fortnight in January were not confined to the bombardment of the city on the part of the Germans. A first engagement took place on the 8th in the direction of La Malmaison and Rueil. On the same day occurred the disappearance of three officers and five men of the Mobile Guard stationed near the bridge of Argenteuil, who had entered into communication with the enemy by means of a boat purposely procured. It was reported that they were the victims of an adroitly prepared surprise, but General Trochu, in a solemn proclamation which he ordered to be read three times to the troops assembled under arms, pronounced them traitors to their duty and the country. He stated that they were deserters to the enemy, and, in ordering them to be prosecuted as such, devoted their memory to eternal shame. On the night of the 9th of January a reconnoissance directed against the Prussian advanced posts on the Eastern railway line, resulted in the blowing up of some houses in which the enemy's guards were entrenched. A similar expedition, having for its objective the German works at the Moulin-de-Pierre, menacing the Fort of Issy, resulted, so one was told by an official bulletin, in complete success; but it was subsequently stated that the officer in command fell on the wrong spot, made some prisoners, destroyed a post, and returned under the impression that he had executed the orders he had been directed to carry out.

On the 13th, in the night, three fresh sorties were made—two on the south-west and one on the north-east. A Prussian corps near Meudon and the Bavarians near Clamart were assailed, while the enemy's positions at Le Bourget were

attacked for the third time. This latter affair was altogether shrouded in mystery, and no official report of it was ever issued. Its motive was to destroy if possible the German batteries which threatened St. Denis with a formidable bombardment; and the forts de l'Est, du Nord, of Aubervilliers, and Romainville, together with two field batteries stationed at Drancy, fired heavily into Le Bourget during three hours, a strong infantry attack being also made. An expedition of this kind was, however, as the French might have known, mere waste of life. The repulse of the assailants followed as a matter of course, and could only have the effect of discouraging the survivors. Forty-eight hours later the Germans in their turn assumed the offensive, directing an attempt against Fort Issy, but the mitrailleuses here stationed speedily compelled them to retreat; whereupon they opened a terrible cannonade from their batteries at Châtillon and on the terrace of the château of Meudon. In the village of Vanves the projectiles fell like hailstones; Issy and Montrouge suffered considerably; and it was not till towards evening that the fire began to slacken. On the following day the bombardment of La Courneuve and St. Denis began.

At the Government Council of January 8, General Trochu had already explained to his colleagues the plan of the fresh "sortie en masse" which he was preparing. On the 10th a discussion arose between the Governor and General Clement Thomas à propos of the National Guard; and the latter, who in earlier times had pointedly called for the employment of the citizen soldiery,* now declared that there was no little

See *ante*, p. 184.

charlatanism about the National Guards' display of courage. "Since they know that they are really to be utilized," he added, "their enthusiasm has greatly diminished." An additional damper was cast on future prospects by M. Jules Favre, who mentioned at the close of the discussion that food would fail completely by the end of the month. A couple of days later General Trochu, remarking that it was most essential to prolong the resistance until General Bourbaki's movement was completed, proposed a number of extreme measures. He declared that tranquility must be assured by putting an end to the calumnious accusations of treason brought against certain generals. Perquisitions ought to be made to seize all concealed provisions, and the right of public meeting and the liberty of the press ought to be abolished. Liberal M. Ernest Picard urged that these measures should be adopted, but only in the event of a great battle, for the "voice of the cannon would then drown the murmurs of the population." Despite this suggestion, the Governor's proposals were not approved of.

On January 14, General Trochu announced that the coming sortie en masse would take place during the next six days, and he submitted to his colleagues the draft of a proclamation, which was found too resigned, and not sufficiently warlike. On the morrow there was a secret sitting of the Council, at which the sortie question was again debated, and of which no procès-verbal has been preserved. Thanks to M. Dréo's "Summary," however, we are made acquainted with what transpired at the séance of the 17th, when the announcement that the provisions of the army would be exhausted on February 5 led to a long

discussion on the approaching capitulation, for, as General Trochu remarked, if the coming sortie failed, surrender would become inevitable. Many among the infatuated Parisians might still delude themselves with false hopes as to the issue of the siege; but the men of the Hôtel de Ville knew well enough that the fall of the capital was at hand. Bitterly did M. Jules Favre reproach General Trochu with his famous declaration, "The Governor of Paris will not capitulate;" but when General Clement Thomas urged that the terrible truth should be revealed to the population—remarking that, if it rose and massacred the Government, the latter would perish quite as gloriously as if it fell beneath the onslaught of the enemy*—not a voice was raised in support of his suggestion. The debate mainly turned on the points, whether Germany would treat with the Government merely as regards the capitulation of Paris or for entire France; whether the Government would have the right to sign a treaty of peace; and whether it had not better resign and hand the capital over to the district mayors to cope as best they could with the hosts of the Fatherland and the rabble of the Commune. Eventually, it was resolved to consult the mayors and to be guided by whatever opinion they expressed.

At the next Council of the Government, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in which General Trochu did not take part, being in the midst of the troops, who, on the morrow, were to fight the last battle of dying Paris, M. Jules Favre submitted the draft of a proclamation which he proposed to address to the Parisians, and in which the approaching sortie

* Curiously enough, M. Clement Thomas *was* subsequently killed by the Reds.

was alluded to as a "supreme struggle" and a "final effort." General Le Flô, Minister of War, declared effectively that, if the attempt failed, it would be useless to count on the National Guard to make another; while M. Favre, in support of the expressions he employed, protested that he really could not lead the population to the last extremities without a word of warning. Nevertheless, his draft was rejected, and it was decided to issue a more hopeful proclamation, of which M. Jules Simon prepared the text. Thus, until the last hour, did the majority of the Government of National Defence persevere in the policy of deceit and reticence which it had followed throughout the siege.

It was at this same Council that the rationing of bread was finally decided on. Already on January 9 M. Picard had proposed this measure; but the question was then adjourned. On the 13th, however, a perfect panic occurred in the outlying arrondissements, the bread being removed per force from the bakers' shops. Not merely was the bread (now made of bran, rice, barley, oats, vermicelli and starch, with a scanty admixture of wheaten flour) getting blacker and blacker, less nourishing and more heavy and indigestible every day, but the scanty supply made people fear that it might suddenly cease altogether. Necessity had compelled M. Jules Ferry, Mayor of Paris, to issue various unpopular decrees. For instance, he prohibited the bakers from selling bread to any one but their usual customers, and this at a moment when half the population of the bombarded districts was flying for dear life to the right bank of the Seine. It therefore seemed that the runaways must either perish from hunger or steal back to the quarter, from which

they had made their escape, in search of bread. Here may be added that Mr. Richard Wallace—who had given quite 80,000*l.* in charities since the beginning of the siege and upon whose generosity the English poor were almost entirely thrown—had, moreover, come forward with 100,000 francs in aid of the unfortunate people driven from home by the German gunners.

It was at the Government Council of the 13th of January that M. Magnin, Minister of Commerce, received permission to requisition all the remaining flour he could lay his hands on ; and on the 18th M. Ferry announced his intention of henceforth limiting the supply of bread to three hundred grammes (10 oz.) per head, per diem, children under five years of age only to receive half that quantity. Several of his colleagues considered this quantity insufficient, but the Mayor of Paris called attention to the fact that the mills now at work only yielded five thousand quintaux métriques of flour a day ; and if the ration was raised to four hundred grammes as suggested a daily supply of six thousand quintaux, which was unobtainable, would be required. As for the provisioning of meat, it appeared from the Mayor's statements that there were still four thousand cows reserved for sick persons and children, together with one hundred and four oxen, kept back for the hospitals. These oxen, with some of the cows which might be killed, would furnish a day's meat. There was also a day's supply of preserved provisions. These last resources would have to be utilized whilst waiting until the remaining horses, including those of the army, could be eaten. "Wretched horses!"—as a writer of the epoch remarked. "Their number is visibly diminishing, and the survivors are painful

objects. They are indeed like the skeleton horse in the Campo Santo at Pisa." No more oats, no more barley, no more straw, no more hay! Of recent times they had been fed on bread, but not even this supreme resource was now left. Each citizen's daily portion of the staff of life was reduced to three hundred grammes, and that of meat to twenty (effective) grammes—an aggregate of 10½ oz. of food, or but a quarter of the habitual and necessary consumption.

Such on the eve of the last great battle, while the roar of the enemy's siege guns resounded through the city, and while the shells fell like hailstones in the bombarded districts, was the state of Paris, the whilom capital of pleasure and of plenty—now reduced to a fraction of what was once its daily pittance; shivering with cold, for firing was all but unobtainable, and well-nigh plunged in darkness after sunset, as gas and oil alike were failing. On that same 18th of January, in the proud palace raised at Versailles by the all-powerful Louis, surnamed the Grand Monarque, the *Roi Soleil*, in the gorgeous Hall of Mirrors, which the Valour, the Fame, the Rank, and the Beauty of France had thronged, the helmeted Princes and Generals of the Fatherland were gathered together. Under the allegorical portrait of Louis XIV., having for inscription that formula of despotism, "*Le Roy gouverne par Luy-même*," and facing an altar bearing a golden crucifix and burning tapers, stood Wilhelm, King of Prussia. A solemn litany had been read, and, as the last notes of an impressive chorale died away, the Hohenzollern mounted a crimson-covered platform, above which gleamed the spear-pointed shafts of many standards. Then came a great rush, and, amid a mighty cheering and waving of helmets, the Victor of

Sadowa and Sedan was proclaimed German Emperor in the name of God !

III. THE LAST SORTIE.

Paris awoke on the 19th of January to find the walls covered with official placards. First came M. Jules Ferry's arrêté prescribing the rationing of bread. Next a decree, requisitioning the residences of all absentees for the accommodation of the wounded and of those citizens driven out of their usual domiciles by the bombardment. A third ordinance called into request all the combustibles and comestibles of non-residents for the service of the general public. A fourth enjoined all husbandmen, who possessed secreted stocks of grain for seed, to give them up within three days, under penalty of confiscation, fine, and imprisonment. A fifth offered a reward of twenty-five francs per quintal to any one informing the authorities of the existence of hidden cereals. Then an order of the day, emanating from General Le Flô, announced that, *during General Trochu's absence*, he had been invested with the supreme command of the troops for the defence of the city and of St. Denis ; and finally a proclamation signed by all the members of the Government, excepting its President,* informed the

* This proclamation, the draft of which was prepared by M. Jules Simon (see *ante*, p. 209), ran as follows :—" Citizens ! The enemy slays our wives and children ; he bombards us night and day ; he covers our hospitals with shells. The cry ' To arms ! ' resounds from every breast. Those amongst us who can offer their lives on the battle-field will march against the foe. Those who remain, jealous of proving themselves worthy of the heroism of their brothers, will submit, if needs be, to the bitterest sacrifices, as a means of promoting the cause of the country. Let us suffer ; let us die, if necessary ; but let us conquer. Vive la République ! "

Parisians that a fresh attempt to pierce the German lines was about to take place.

There had been so much marching and counter-marching through the streets of the city on the previous day that it was self-evident important military operations were at hand. In the evening the Governor of Paris had quitted his residence at the Louvre for the citadel of Mont Valérien, whence he proposed to direct this fresh sortie, which had for its immediate objectives the enemy's lines from St. Cloud to La Jonchère by way of Garches. Three corps d'armée, commanded by Generals Vinoy, Carré de Bellemare, and Ducrot, and forming a gross total of more than 100,000 men (troops of the line, Mobiles, and National Guards), supported by three hundred guns, were appointed to take part in the attack. General Vinoy's forces were to advance against the redoubt of Montretout and the villas belonging to MM. de Béarn, Pozzo di Borgo, Armengaud, and Zimmermann, all in the immediate vicinity of St. Cloud. The redoubt of Montretout, situated between the park and village of St. Cloud, was one of those defensive works commenced by the French prior to the investment and abandoned in an unfinished state on the arrival of the German troops. Its recapture by the French implied the possibility of commanding the highway to Versailles and of turning the Prussian batteries at Bas-Meudon, now actively shelling Grenelle and the Point du Jour. While General Vinoy's efforts were concentrated in this direction, the central corps d'armée, under General de Bellemare, was to assail the German positions east of the Château of La Bergerie; the column on the right, commanded by General Ducrot, attacking the Château of Buzenval and

Longboyau, with the view of advancing on the Lupin breeding stables and uniting with General Vinoy in the neighbourhood of Garches. The entire line of front did not extend four English miles.

All existing means of communication with the so-called peninsula of Gennevilliers—formed by a north-easterly bend in the course of the Seine—were employed for the concentration of the troops, some of whom were despatched out of Paris by rail; while others, including many National Guards, went on foot along the Avenue de la Grande Armée; and, crossing the bridge of Neuilly over the Seine, reached the ground where they were to bivouac until the following morning. The night was obscure, and a curtain of thick fog—Thames-like in its consistency—hung over the scene of action when 6 A.M., the hour appointed for the advance, arrived. The men of the National Guard—most of whom were incorporated in General de Bellemare's corps d'armée—had been kept under arms with four days' provisions on their backs since 2 A.M.; and several hours were yet to elapse before they were ordered into action. At seven o'clock, by a road running parallel with the Seine along the height above Suresnes, General Vinoy's troops emerged from the rear of Mont Valérien, whence the Governor of Paris, installed in an observatory, commanded the entire movement. Hidden for a while by the hillock on which stands the farm of La Fouilleuse, and keeping to the right of the brickyard of La Croix du Roi, they advanced against Montretout, which was held by a detachment of Prussian Poles. A savage hand-to-hand fight ensued, and so stout a resistance was made that the redoubt, although undefended by artillery, was only captured at 9.30. An hour and a half later the

French had made themselves masters of the four villas mentioned above, and had taken some sixty prisoners. From Montretout a part of the corps d'armée descended into St. Cloud, the houses of which were scoured from cellar to garret ; while skirmishers went forward firing wildly after the retreating Germans as the latter promptly sought shelter in the park.

Meanwhile, General de Bellemare's men marched to the attack of La Bergerie, but on reaching the farm of La Fouilleuse they found their progress arrested. Three successive charges were made before this position was carried, and then the grounds of the Château of Buzenval were entered. It was here that the marching battalions of the National Guard received the true baptism of fire. Ascending the eminence of La Bergerie, they advanced amid vineyards, plantations, and gardens towards La Celle St. Cloud by way of the lakelet of St. Cucufa. The line of battle being no longer preserved, the fight subsided into a series of isolated combats ; and as the untrained Parisians, wasting their ammunition, blazed away at the trees, hundreds of them were shot down by their comrades in the rear as well as by the wall and trench protected Germans. The latter had scarcely defended their first line, but fell back on their fixed positions, where, until reinforcements could arrive, they kept up so heavy a fire that the French were utterly unable to advance.

But what had become of the dilatory Ducrot ? Already at 3 A.M. his troops were on foot. From their point of concentration some seven and a half miles had to be traversed to reach the scene of action ; a feat of no apparent magnitude, but which took many hours to perform : having to be accomplished "on a railroad covered with obstructions and a highway

occupied by a column of artillery," which, although in a well-known neighbourhood nigh to Paris, "*had lost itself in the dark.*"* Farther on, the road between Nanterre and Reuil was swept by a Prussian battery installed on the right bank of the Seine in advance of Les Carrières St. Denis. The French field artillery was well-nigh powerless against the German guns; the troops faltered for a while, and it was only after an armour-clad train, consisting of two carriages, each armed with a long swivel gun, had been sent forward along the St. Germain railway line that their passage was finally secured. They arrived two hours late on the field of battle, and the advantage of making three simultaneous attacks was therefore lost. Had General Ducrot's men been concentrated in the vicinity of Mont Valérien, close to the scene of the morning's work, this contretemps could never have occurred.

When the three corps were in action together, an attempt was made to unite them south of La Bergerie, while, with the view of making a diversion, the cannon of the ramparts thundered against Sèvres and the park of St. Cloud. But the Germans had had time enough to bring up reinforcements of infantry—the Bavarian contingent and the Landwehr of the Guards—as well as a formidable mass of artillery. The latter opening fire, a violent artillery duel now ensued; but the French field guns were eventually overmastered, particularly by the powerful battery of Garches. Round about the Porte de Longboyau, where the Germans had loopholed the walls and houses skirting the park of Buzenval, a brisk engagement was kept up. General Ducrot repeatedly led

* French official report of the sortie.

the line and the National Guards to the attack; but the enemy successfully resisted all his efforts. At four o'clock, moreover, the Germans executed an offensive movement against the French centre and left, and both these corps were forced to retreat. It is true that towards the close of the day they again advanced, and scaled the summit of the heights. But their position was not tenable. Night was coming on, and at Montretout it had been found impossible to get a single gun into position. Commandant de Lareinty, who occupied the redoubt with three hundred Mables, had to be abandoned, and was forced to surrender at discretion. Worn out with twelve hours' fruitless fighting, disheartened by the strenuous resistance they had encountered, the Parisian troops began slowly to fall back between Maisons Crochard and Mont Valérien. It was half-past six o'clock. The last sortie had failed!*

In Paris, where the day had been given up to waiting and watching for the issue, every eminence likely to afford a view was crowded soon after dawn; and in the avenues radiating from the Arc de Triomphe returning orderlies and ambulance vans were continually beset for news. As the rapid discharges of artillery re-echoed through the streets—in the one direction proclaiming the intensity of the conflict, and in another testifying to the unabated violence of the bombardment—the anxiety of the Parisians became very great. The first news was propitious, and during the afternoon at the Bourse the Rente rose 40c. In the evening the boulevards were crowded with people

* This description of the battle of Buzenval is based on the official reports and the most reliable newspaper accounts of the epoch.

discussing the probabilities of success. The joyous excitement of December 2 was wanting, but the rumours of victory circulated so persistently that it became difficult not to believe in them. At half-past ten o'clock the news that the French left was in retreat, with the advice from General Trochu that the fact should be communicated to the population, reached the Hôtel de Ville, where the Government was sitting en permanence. The Council demurred to the President's suggestion, and MM. Favre, Ferry, and Le Flô started off for Mont Valérien to learn from his very lips the precise position of affairs. It was 4 A.M. when they returned, corroborating the fatal news of the defeat. A few hours later those Parisians who had gone to bed believing in victory, were cruelly undeceived. Every heart was at once cast down and full of sorrow. People were exasperated and bewildered that "for some reason or other their army should invariably be beaten, although it had always had the choice of its battle-field and the advantage of being able to surprise the enemy." In the present instance, great dissatisfaction was felt that General Trochu should have made no use of the greater part of the artillery and the reserves. The Governor was, however, persuaded that, even if this sortie had been made with the co-operation of every gun and every armed man in Paris, it would have proved equally futile. The Germans had, according to the French authorities, encircled the city in a triple line of investment,* which, in General Trochu's opinion, was

* "To fortify this triple line of investment, the Prussians had made use of crenellated walls, and of abattis, for which they seem to have had a special predilection; at some places, too, they had made entrenchments and thrown up redoubts. The parapets of

impassable; for he subsequently remarked, at the National Assembly:—"I thank heaven that I resisted those who urged me to march forward; if I had led the troops beyond the first line, those who reached the second would never have seen the third: and if my conscience is at rest, it is because I averted the useless sacrifice of the lives of many thousands of soldiers."

The losses occasioned by the battle of Buzenval were, nevertheless, considerable; and the downcast Parisians—whom a pigeon-messenger at this very moment apprised of General Chanzy's crushing defeat at Le Mans—were stupefied on reading in a note from General Trochu to the chief of his staff:—"You must now urgently demand at Sèvres an armistice of two days, in order to pick up the wounded and bury the dead. This will require time, efforts, vehicles well horsed, and a large number of men for the litters. Lose no time." This despatch was not intended to be published, and a blunder alone caused its insertion in the *Journal Officiel*. Those malcontents who declared that General Trochu had engaged in the sortie certain of defeat, and with no other object than the horrible one of getting the troops slaughtered, maintained that this document was the corroboration of their assertions. It was currently estimated that

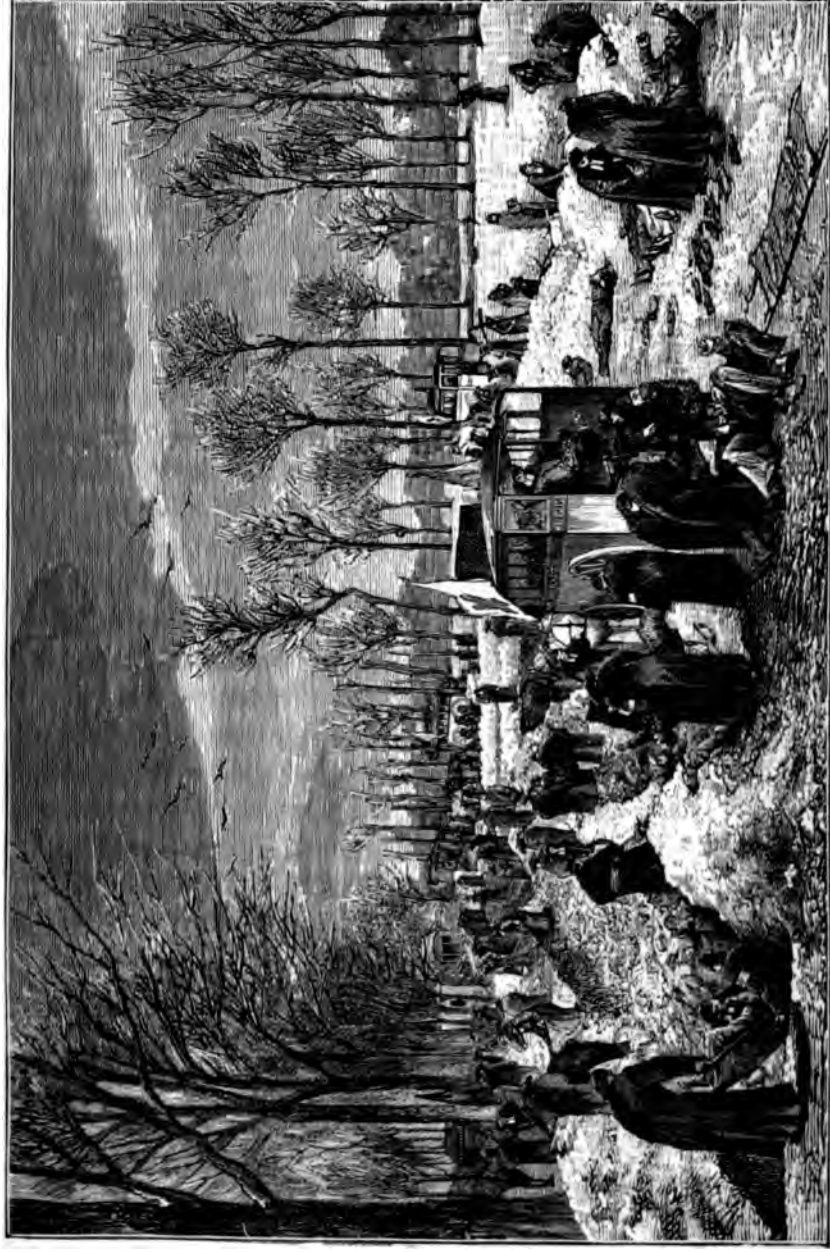
their redoubts had nearly the same profiles as ours, and differed in a few respects only. The epaulements of their batteries were not so thick as those in the case of French artillery; and, speaking generally, their works were more rude and less finished than ours; but they were well designed, and, perhaps, more practically useful. They had availed themselves with great skill of any advantages afforded by the nature and the varieties of the ground in many places; and their batteries were almost always raised on good sites."

—"Campagne de Paris," 1870-71, par le Général Vinoy.

from 7000 to 9000 men were hors de combat; but, in point of fact, the French losses did not exceed 2700 killed, wounded, and missing;* and General Trochu subsequently expressed his belief that one-half of these owed their fate to the disorderly fire of the National Guards, whom he had so long hesitated to employ, precisely for fear of such a deplorable result. The attempts of the citizen soldiers to render themselves bullet-proof had signally failed, their felt breast-plates being easily penetrated by the balls of the foreign Zündnadelgewehr and the national Chassepot and "snuff-box."

The armistice solicited by General Trochu for the recovery of the wounded and the burial of the dead was granted, and the black-robed Christian Brothers were soon upon the scene carefully tending those in whom life still lingered, and consigning the remains of the departed to their Mother Earth. Rich was the harvest garnered by the King of Terrors; for if the number of the dead was at first exaggerated, more than one of those who had fallen was favourably known to fame. Early that same summer, art-loving Paris had rushed with one accord to view, at the Salon of the Palais de l'Industrie, a picture entitled "*Salomé la Danseuse*," rightly described as a splendid technical triumph. It was painted by Alexandre-Georges-Henri Regnault, a young man of four-and-twenty, who had, as it has been remarked, already secured a reputation as one of the few really original artists of the age who were painters proper and by gift of

* Five hundred of the latter were taken prisoners by the Germans, whose losses were estimated by the Imperial head-quarters at about 400 men.



AFTER THE SORTIE : AN AMBULANCE AT WORK.

Nature. Having enlisted in a marching battalion of the National Guards, he took part in the last sortie (as in previous engagements) and fell, shot in the face, whilst advancing on Montretout. He was so disfigured that those who first found him were uncertain of his identity ; and, being unable to carry away the body, they cut off the number of his coat and took it to his family, who recognized it as his. When the search was renewed the body was nowhere to be found, and in the public funeral which subsequently took place another corpse was substituted for that of the gifted artist. At Montretout, moreover, another well known, though less talented, painter, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, was desperately wounded ; and Colonel Rochebrune, the former Chief of the Polish Zouaves de la Mort, also found his death whilst marching against the redoubt. Singularly enough, the comrade of Langiewicz was slain by a Polish bullet, for Montretout happened to be defended by Posen soldiers. In the park of Buzenval, where the National Guard lost so many men, fell the venerable Marquis of Coriolis, a volunteer at sixty-seven years of age ; Gustave Lambert, the man of science and the emulator of Sir John Franklin ; one of the sons of M. de Lesseps, the great engineer, and Maurice Bixio, his nephew ; the Count de Montbrison, one of the noblest names in France ; with hundreds of obscure citizens, who sacrificed their lives for the cause of their native land.

That same afternoon, at the Théâtre Français, there was a performance of the "*Médecin malgré Lui*." "Got outshone himself," wrote a spectator of Molière's chef-d'œuvre ; "never was he more brilliant ; the public was entranced, and recalled him again and again. The dreary cannon roared far away—too far

away to be exciting, and yet close by—but two miles off, under the walls of the great city: presently there was a stir and whispering, a commotion in the corridor, as a stretcher was carried by, bearing a shapeless mass covered with a bloody cloak: it was all that remained of poor Seveste, a promising young actor attached to the theatre. He had played his part in a great tragedy, and had gone forth that day to offer himself up for his country's weal: the sacrifice had been accepted. He was carried into the Foyer des Artistes with a mortal wound, and disappeared in the shadow of Talma's statue, behind the towering marble of the great Rachel. Poor Seveste! so young, so full of promise! Ah, well, it's very sad!" Soon the buzzing ceased, and every man settled himself in his seat and rubbed his glasses with his handkerchief as the prompter gave three raps, and the curtain rose for *the last Act!**

* "The Drama in Paris during the Siege," published in the *Athenæum*, February, 1871.

XII.

CONQUERED BY FAMINE.

I. THE HYDRA OF ANARCHY WAKES UP AGAIN.

THE LAST ACT!—And yet, despite intense sufferings, despite the scarcity of food and the failure of all efforts to pierce the German lines, the Parisians scarcely imagined at this moment that the conclusion of the eventful drama in which they played the leading part, was so swiftly approaching. The luckless citizens were alternately swayed by feelings of exasperation and depression, but their apprehensions, though less vague than formerly, had as yet scarcely assumed a definite form. Indeed, even those whose misgivings were the gravest, still shrank from realizing the hopeless nature of their position. The enemy's batteries had now found a fresh objective in St. Denis, and his shells were falling fast around the sacred edifice, which yet contains the tombs, if not the ashes, of the Kings of France. Thus the bombardment came from the north as well as from the south of the capital. With this cannonade to contend against, provisions fast failing, and the death-rate from disease assuming alarming proportions, Paris apparently persevered in its resistance, but in point of fact the hours of the defence were numbered. Before the curtain fell on the last scene—to rise again, a few weeks later, on the most terrible sequel that History, the greatest of all

dramatic authors, could devise—an ominous episode was to occur. The wild utterances in the clubs and the foolish bombast of the Communist press had all along reminded one of the threatening presence of a most disagreeable monster—at times jocularly termed the Hydra of Anarchy. When the Hydra's effort to gain the upper hand on October 31 resulted in utter failure, it retired into its den, situated on the confines of Belleville and La Villette, and there, complacently dozing, it awaited the pretext and the occasion for a fresh raid on the Hôtel de Ville. Both of these seemed furnished by the military fiasco of January 19. Prior to the so-called Battle of Buzenval, the Government already debated on the possibility of defeat engendering insurrection, and that the apprehensions entertained were not unfounded appeared but a few hours after the French had abandoned Montretout; for at 11 p.m. that same night, when almost every one in Paris was still plunged in uncertainty as to the result of the engagement, the rappel was beaten by order of the demagogic leaders throughout Belleville and Menilmontant, with the view of persuading the citizen soldiery to march upon the Government head-quarters. As only some five hundred men responded to the call, the design was reluctantly abandoned. Still the situation remained very threatening, and on the morrow several battalions of National Guards, believed to be favourable to the authorities, were stationed around the Hôtel de Ville, a number of mitrailleuses being, moreover, planted in the adjacent streets. At the same time orders were despatched for a portion of the regular troops that had taken part in the recent sortie to re-enter Paris; their return through the Porte Maillot, and along the

proudly entitled "Avenue de la Grande Armée," being witnessed by a vast assemblage, comprising a large proportion of women, many of whom were moved to tears at view of the defeated regiments, whilst a blank look of despair stole over each masculine countenance.

At the Council held on the 20th, at the Hôtel de Ville, particulars of General Chanzy's crushing defeat at Le Mans were communicated to the Government. The Army of the Loire was virtually destroyed—10,000 men had been made prisoners; 50,000 were in flight. The situation was indeed desperate. What was to be said to the arrondissement mayors who were to meet that afternoon to discuss future plans in compliance with the Government's own suggestions? M. Jules Ferry proposed that the municipal authorities should only be told the truth, so far as the provisioning was concerned; besides, he advocated another sortie; as did MM. Picard, Arago, Jules Simon, and Magnin. The possibility of a fresh effort was being debated, when there arrived a despatch rumouring that the Club Favié, at Belleville, was about to march in arms upon the Hôtel de Ville, whereupon M. Jules Favre remarked that he hoped to quiet all agitation by announcing that General Trochu had been superseded. He proposed, moreover, the despatch on the morrow of an emissary to Versailles, with the view of negotiating an armistice. Later on, the question of a fresh sortie being reverted to, the Governor of Paris suggested that the chief command should be entrusted to General Vinoy, and eventually it was decided to interrogate MM. Vinoy, Le Flô, Fournèze, and Bellemare, separately on the morrow, as to the possibility of raising the siege.

At the meeting of the mayors, held that afternoon,
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General Trochu expressed his willingness to retire, if a General with more faith than himself in a favourable termination of the struggle could only be found. Accordingly in the evening, after he had left the Council at the Hôtel de Ville, M. Jules Favre hastened to the Louvre, and reminded him of this promise. In accordance with his own suggestion, it had been decided to replace him by General Vinoy, and M. Favre observed that it would be as well to announce his resignation of the chief command in the morrow's *Journal Officiel*. But M. Trochu declared that his several functions of Governor, President, and Generalissimo were linked one to another, and that he could not divest himself of any one office without abandoning the others. At the Council held the next evening, the General bitterly complained of the want of confidence shown him by his colleagues, but eventually he agreed to resign his command, though still retaining the Presidency of the Council. The appointment of General Vinoy was yet under debate when the news arrived that a drunken mob had broken open the prison of Mazas, and delivered the political prisoners confined there, including the notorious Major Flourens. The dangers of the hour at once restored unanimity in the Government Council; and, like so many terrified sheep pressing round their shepherd for protection, the members of the National Defence nestled close to the maligned Trochu, imploring him to save them.*

The event which caused all their alarm had been brought about as follows. The insurrection of October 31 having been inquired into, the authorities had decided that citizens Blanqui, Gustave Flourens,

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

Millière, Tibaldi, and a dozen others should—in virtue of the state of siege—be tried by the military tribunals on the charges of exciting to civil war, illegal arrests, and menaces of death. In the case of citizen Félix Pyat and of two other accused, the proceedings were, for want of evidence, abandoned. Citizen Blanqui, having securely concealed himself, was still at large; and even Major Flourens, despite the judicial proceedings hanging over his head, had escaped confinement until the cowardice of his battalion of sharpshooters at Créteil led to its disarmament and his own incarceration at Mazas. Having deprived the Communist clan of its most venturesome leader, the apprehensions of the Government had for some little while been less acute than formerly; but now, the last sortie having failed, it was feared that the turbulent prolétariat might, in a fit of desperation, improvise a chieftain to lead them to the assault of the Hôtel de Ville.

It was not, however, exclusively the military disaster of the 19th which embittered the feelings of the lower orders. The rationing of bread—albeit a necessity—was with them an especial grievance. Man, we are told, cannot live by bread alone, and certainly not on the three hundred grammes to which the ration was now reduced. The prevailing state of semi-starvation led to animated debates at the clubs, where one found orators launching forth bitter denunciations of the rich, “who had hams in their cellars, and indulged in orgies at the restaurants in the company of demoiselles.” It was suggested that the Government had deliberately planned the extermination of the Bellevillites, who bothered them more than the Germans; and to effect this result not merely was clay—derived from the excavations on the

Butte Montmartre—amalgamated with the flour, but each loaf (so we were told) contained a mysterious slow poison; the proof being that, after having partaken of it, one invariably had a dry throat, to get rid of which copious libations of “petit bleu” were absolutely necessary. The egotism of the prudent bourgeoisie would, however, according to another orator, fail to save this hated class from its well-merited fate. When the Germans entered Paris, instead of feeding the bourgeois, they would plunder them, for, said the same speaker, “the Germans will begin by imposing a war contribution of two or three milliards, and it is not in Belleville that they will look for it. (Hilarity among the audience.) No! as they will not find money enough, they will take the masterpieces of the museums, and levy a contribution on the rich furniture of the bourgeois, on the pictures which decorate their saloons, and on their finely chiselled bijoux.”

Such being the state of popular feeling in the so-called excentric arrondissements, no wonder if a serious outburst occurred. Still it must be remarked that the first attempts made, after the final sortie, to provoke an émeute encountered signal failure. On the afternoon of January 21 a Communist manifestation was improvised at the funeral of Colonel Rochebrune;* and several companies of Belleville National Guards marched down into Paris shouting, “La déchéance! La Commune!” This appeal to revolt being treated with utter indifference by the inhabitants of the districts which the agitators traversed, the latter, who were not in sufficient force

* See *ante*, p. 221.

to attempt anything by themselves, returned somewhat crestfallen to Belleville. But, although the attempt, like that on the night of the 19th, resulted in complete failure, it showed that a section, at least, of the extreme party still harboured the most hostile designs.

Meanwhile, the rumour of impending changes in the command of the Army of Paris had spread through the city, and the meetings of the clubs that evening were unusually stormy and seditious. Several orators declared, amid the applause of a crowded audience, that General Vinoy was quite as much a traitor as General Trochu; and the announcement that the latter was to retain the Presidency of the Government was received with a torrent of execrations. At the Club de la Reine Blanche, at Montmartre, at the Club Central Républicaine, and at the Club de l'Ecole de Médecine, a general rendezvous on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, at noon on the morrow, was unanimously decided on; and an attempt—which failed—was made to induce the municipal functionaries of the Radical districts—notably, Mayor Clémenceau, of Montmartre—to participate in the demonstration, arrayed in their scarfs of office.

The Bellevillites, undeterred by the failure of their previous manifestations, were now seized with the bright idea of marching on Mazas, and of delivering the renowned and beloved Flourens from durance vile. Accordingly, at a little past midnight, some eight hundred excited citizens—National Guards and disbanded Tirailleurs—proceeded along the dark streets towards the prison. Finding on their arrival that the guard was composed of only thirty men, they threatened these with instant death if they were not

allowed to enter. Resistance being hopeless, the officer in command consented to the admission of a deputation of three, who had no sooner made their way into the prison than they fired on the guard. In the effort made to eject them the gate had to be reopened, whereupon the entire band of rioters precipitated itself into the courtyard. The director of the prison was next summoned and forced to give up the keys, and the eight political prisoners confined in the building were at once set at liberty. The most notorious of these were Gustave Flourens and Millièrè, the latter of whom played a subordinate rôle in the demonstration of October 31, having first acquired celebrity in connection with the murder of Victor Noir by Prince Pierre Bonaparte. Flourens being released, he and his rescuers marched in triumph upon the Mairie of the 20th arrondissement—that of Menilmontant—comprising the turbulent districts of Belleville, St. Fargeau, Père Lachaise, and Charonne.

The rioters installed themselves, without opposition, in the municipal edifice, which they proposed to make the head-quarters of a little drama to be played a few hours later on. The night air had sharpened everybody's appetite, so without more ado the rioters appropriated two thousand rations of bread—destined to be distributed among the starving poor of their own district—stove in a cask of wine, also set aside for the indigent, and pillaged a neighbouring grocer's shop. The episode would not have been complete without the production of a proclamation, which citizen Flourens indited, to the effect that the Government, having taken refuge in the Fort of Mont Valérien, the time had now come for Paris to assume the management of her own affairs. In point of fact the Government

had not left the Hôtel de Ville, where it was at that very moment assembled in Council. The release of citizen Flourens and the occupation of the Menilmontant Mairie becoming known to the authorities, several battalions of loyal National Guards were despatched to the spot. They surrounded the municipal building and drove the rioters into the street; so that by 6.30 A.M. order was completely re-established throughout the district.

Still, before separating, the malcontents had bound themselves together by an oath to meet that same day at noon upon the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville—a perspective which called for decided action on the part of the Government of National Defence. The members of the latter, warned by their experience of October 31, and fearing that this time they might not get off so cheaply, hastened to place themselves in a position of defence. At half-past three in the morning the commanders of the various sections of the ramparts were warned by telegram of the position of affairs; being, moreover, requested to hold their men ready at the disposal of the authorities. Later on General Vinoy telegraphed to his subordinate, General Blanchard, to send three battalions of Finistère Mobiles into Paris; whilst Trochu ordered General d'Exéa to occupy the Quartier des Lilas with such infantry as he could dispose of, and one or two battalions of artillery, with the view of making a flank attack upon Belleville if necessary. To General Courty, at Puteaux, order was given to re-enter the capital with his artillery and infantry, and wait for further instructions in the Champs Elysées. All the infantry posts throughout the city were also reinforced, and the Garde Républicaine, horse and foot, was

kept under arms during the small hours of the morning.*

The Parisians woke up to find in the *Journal Officiel* the formal announcement of M. Vinoy's appointment as Generalissimo; and on their walls an order of the day from the new commander, in which he remarked that the critical moment had now arrived. The Government had appealed to his patriotism, and he could not refuse the dangerous honour of command; for he was a soldier, and did not shrink from the perils attached to this great responsibility. Inside the city the party of disorder was agitating, despite the thunder of the cannon outside the walls. This danger the General was prepared to face, convinced that the army, the National Guard, and all good citizens would give him their support. Side by side with this proclamation appeared an appeal from General Clement Thomas, in which, after announcing the release of citizen Flourens, he called on all the loyal National Guards to rise and crush the perturbators.

The early part of the day—it was Sunday—passed off quietly; but towards noon many scores of people, who had heard of the resolutions taken by the clubs the previous evening, strolled towards the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville to see if the Communists meant to carry their threats into effect. Meanwhile, a singular meeting was being held at the Ministry of Public Instruction across the Seine; the personages present being MM. Jules Simon and Dorian, members of the Government;

* See telegrams and reports in "Le Gouvernement du 4 Septembre: Documents, Papiers, Pièces et Dépêches publiés par la Commission d'Enquête nommée par la Commune." Edition officielle. Paris: 1871.

F. Favre, H. Martin, Arnaud de l'Ariège, Clémenceau, Bonvalet, Tirard, and Herisson, arrondissement mayors; and finally, several officers, including General Ducrot, eight colonels (two of whom belonged to the National Guard), and three chefs d'escadron. These officers were asked to make known any plan to raise the blockade which they might have conceived, and M. Simon declared that if one presented itself, having a serious chance of success, the Government would invest its author with the supreme command, no matter what might be his present rank, provided, of course, that he felt sufficient confidence in his design to put it into execution. It was, however, unanimously admitted that nothing remained to be done; that the game was lost, and that diplomacy must now take the place of generalship.

Strolling through Paris that afternoon one observed the usual compact crowds, composed mainly of women, waiting wearily for their pittance of meat or bread outside the butchers' or bakers' shops. The boulevards were thronged with loungers; and the cafés were crammed with beer and absinthe drinkers, with whom General Vinoy's appointment was the leading topic of conversation. At the Théâtre Français a crowded audience was listening to "Tartuffe;" but it was impossible to forget that one was besieged, for at rapid intervals came the noise of the exploding shells thrown by the German batteries and the answering roar of the cannon of the forts. The masses of infantry which lined the Champs Elysées inspired many promenaders with the belief that the new Commander-in-Chief intended making a fresh sortie, despite the crushing failure of the last; for in that neighbourhood, at least, no one had the suspicion that the

troops had been gathered together for service against their own compatriots on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville. Here the prudent shopkeepers had put up their shutters in anticipation of coming events, and retiring to their *entresols*, complacently surveyed from the windows the growing assemblage which thronged the Place. From time to time a few mob orators mounted on stools which they had procured, or adopted the nearest lamp-post as platform, their utterances being as a rule but feebly applauded, though every now and then a shout of "Vive la Commune!" was raised.

A deputation which had been constituted, with Tony Revillon, the rival of Timothée Trimm for journalistic popularity, at its head, demanded an interview with the Government; but on learning that the members of the National Defence were in Council "elsewhere," the delegates consented to interview the adjoint of the Mayor of Paris, M. Gustave Chaudey, who, like citizen Revillon, was a journalist of some repute. From M. Chaudey the delegates found it difficult to extort either the promise of another sortie, or any precise information concerning the situation. He could only undertake to acquaint the authorities with the representations made to him, and, having received this answer, the deputation was courteously shown the door. The demeanour of the crowd, although agitated, was not as yet decidedly hostile; still, having heard that the "générale" was being beaten at Batignolles, with the view of inciting the National Guards to march against the Hôtel de Ville, General Vinoy judged prudent to order General Courty to advance with his artillery and infantry as far as the Place de la Concorde, whither General Bertin was also instructed to repair with the mounted Gendarmerie and Garde Républicaine.

At about three o'clock, as Colonel Vabre, who now commanded the Hôtel de Ville, reconducted to the door a second deputation received by M. Chaudey, a band of between one hundred and one hundred and fifty National Guards, mostly belonging to the 101st marching battalion, debouched from the Rue du Temple, a drummer at their head beating the charge. The sentinels usually guarding the entrance of the municipal palace had been withdrawn, and a few officers of Mobiles alone remained walking up and down inside the railings. Suddenly these officers were fired upon by the newcomers, who had divided themselves into small groups scattered over the Place, at the suggestion, it is said, of ex-Commandant Sapia, who was on the spot in plain clothes. Some hundred shots were fired, but it was not until Adjutant-Major Barnard had been severely wounded that the Mobiles inside the Hôtel de Ville poured a volley on the dense concourse of people. A perfect panic ensued—men, women, and children terror-stricken by the discharge, rushed pell-mell into the adjoining streets, seeking safety in the nearest cafés and in the vestibules of adjoining houses. In the general confusion, scores were knocked over and trampled under foot by their frightened fellow-citizens; sticks, umbrellas, baskets, gloves, handkerchiefs, and even purses were dropped by the runaways in their hasty flight; the shrieks of the wounded rent the air, and over a score of bodies lay stretched upon the pavement, when a minute afterwards the mass of sightseers and rioters had disappeared.

But the fray was not yet over, for, from the windows of neighbouring houses, and the corners of streets and quays, the rioters returned the Mobiles' fire. The

first-floor windows of the Hôtel de Ville were entirely smashed, the old casemates above the equestrian statue of the good King Henri were riddled with bullets, and even the door of the Salle du Trône was injured by projectiles which penetrated into the building. In the meantime, however, General de Malroy had been hurriedly ordered by telegram to take the command of the loyal National Guards, and of the Gendarmerie and Garde Républicaine, massed on the Place du Carrousel, with which forces he was to advance on the Hôtel de Ville, conjointly by way of the Rue de Rivoli, the quays, and the Avenue Victoria. Column after column soon poured on to the place, and after twenty minutes' turbulent anarchy the rioters were put to flight, a score of them falling into the hands of General de Malroy's men. Five people, including two children, had been killed, and some twenty were seriously wounded.

So, on the one hundred and twenty-sixth day of the siege of Paris, blood had for the first time been shed in an intestine brawl. The manifestation never presented the slightest chance of success, for the rioters were not in sufficient force. It was certainly not organized by the real leaders of the Communist party, for, although these latter had just issued a threatening manifesto, they knew well enough that the end of the siege was approaching, so that it was useless for them to try and overthrow the Government; for even if they proved successful, they would then find themselves face to face with the victorious Germans, and all the odium of a capitulation would necessarily fall upon their own shoulders. As for citizen Flourens, despite his liberation, he was not even present on the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville that Sunday afternoon; but it

subsequently transpired that the aged maniac Blanqui had installed himself at an early hour in a neighbouring café, whence he transmitted orders to the rioters on the Place. It was now necessary to prevent a renewal of this sanguinary incident, and, directly order was restored, the Government issued an indignant proclamation, threatening the participators in the movement with severe punishment. At the same time it decided unanimously to decree the suppression of all the clubs until the end of the siege; the Prefect of Police undertaking to carry this measure into effect. The suppression of the *Combat* and the *Réveil*, the most violent of the revolutionary organs, was also voted, together with a proposal that their editors, citizens Félix Pyat and Delescluze, should be arrested. General Vinoy demanded, moreover, the authorization to instal a court-martial to try those rioters who had been taken, otherwise he would have to resort to summary executions. In this instance, however, the Government preferred adopting a middle course, that of establishing fresh councils of war.*

That evening Paris was greatly agitated, and at every corner along the boulevard, by the light of some flickering oil lamp, the people gathered and discussed the drama of the day. The measures taken by the Government to suppress the riot found many excited adversaries; and even less passionate citizens could ill brook the idea of being fired on by their own soldiers. With interdiction (as yet ignored) suspended above its head, the Club Favié, at Belleville, now met for the last time, and an orator, arrayed in a broad red sash, bitterly denounced the indifference of his

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

fellow Bellevillites. "Two days in succession," he exclaimed, "we called you to arms to overthrow the infamous Government of the Hôtel de Ville. Each time you responded, 'We will all be there,' and you were then a thousand or twelve hundred! But to-day at the Hôtel de Ville there were not more than forty Bellevillites, for those who kept the appointment mostly belonged to the 13th arrondissement (the Quartier Mouffetard); indeed, Belleville, which prided itself on being the crater of the revolution, has abdicated." The audience generally admitted that the orator's statement was correct, and a fresh speaker declared that all the harm came from the clubs; for it was impossible to take a manly resolution in the midst of women, children, and good-for-nothings, who came to the clubs to digest their dinners. He demanded the formation of secret societies, the members of which would be able to concert together, and then, when the moment for action arrived, the revolutionists would no longer find the Hôtel de Ville garrisoned with Mobiles and defended with mitrailleuses. Another citizen suggested that the proper course was to begin by reoccupying the local Mairie, at present held by a troop of douaniers, and to instal citizen Flourens as Mayor, in the name of the people. Although only twenty-three citizens could be found ready to march in arms upon the municipal edifice, the mere rumour of their approach sufficed to alarm the douaniers, who hastily evacuated the Mairie, and left it once more, for a brief interval, at the mercy of the clubbists. On the morrow the latter were able to read the Government decree suppressing their customary places of resort as well as their favourite newspapers.

II. ILLUSIONS AT AN END.

If, after the crushing failure of the last great sortie, many of the Parisians still clung to the hope of ultimate victory, no one retained any belief in success after the Communist brawl of January 22. Paradoxical as it may seem, the Parisians were more affected by an event but indirectly connected with the defence than by the negative result of all General Trochu's military efforts. The rising of the Reds reminded one of a well-nigh neglected danger, and fear of the hateful Hydra of Anarchy lifted, as by enchantment, the scales from the eyes of the besieged. Illusions were at an end, and the fall of the city at last appeared inevitable.

The bombardment was daily increasing in fury, not so much on the southern side of Paris—although Grenelle was being subjected to a constant cannonade—as on the north, where St. Denis was vigorously assailed. From the brow of Montmorency and the heights of Richebourg the German shells plunged in upon the familiar suburban town, doing considerable damage to the historic Cathedral, reducing several houses to ruins and igniting multitudinous fires. Indeed, many of the inhabitants fled in terror into Paris, and the Mayor of the locality, seized with a fit of patriotism, thought proper to paint the inscription, "Lâche Déserteur," upon the shutters of several abandoned shops. Inside the capital, the sufferings of the besieged had become so intense that the force of hope and patience could no further go. People had now to form queues and wait during long hours, at times in muddy snow or under a shower of heavy rain, for meat, bread, wood, chocolate—indeed, for well-nigh

every necessary of life. Nearly one's whole day and one's whole strength were exhausted by all this tedious waiting, which, besides killing numerous inhabitants (some few suddenly dropping down and dying on the spot), had sown the seeds of disease in many thousands more. The constant increase in the death-rate was indeed appalling. During the week ending January 7, 3680 people died from disease; during the following week 3982 deaths were registered; while from January 14 to January 20 the mortality from natural causes was no less than 4465. The privations of the hour were of course especially trying to the very young, to the aged, to mothers nursing, to the sick and the wounded; and among these categories the mortality was particularly great. Indigestion and irregularity had, moreover, been induced by low diet among the otherwise healthy. While some few persons began to complain of loss of appetite, the great majority expressed a decided craving for a full meal of animal food. All had fallen off in flesh, some to a great extent: and even those who, in other respects, did not apparently suffer in health expressed an inability to perform their ordinary work without experiencing intense fatigue.*

The food question was indeed all-paramount; bread constituted in this instance the true sinews of war. There were frequent disturbances outside the bakers' shops, for, despite the scanty allowance of 300 grammes per head per diem, it continually happened that the bakers could not supply even this beggarly pittance to their customers. To compensate in a measure for the limitation of the bread allowance, it

* *The Lancet*, January, 1871.

was determined that one-fifth of a litre of wine should be distributed gratuitously at each baker's shop to every needy person presenting an order for bread. At the Government Council, held on the 23rd of January, the Food Committee announced that there were only 20,000 horses left; while M. Magnin only had in stock 16,000 metric quintals of wheat, 9000 quintals of rice, 23,000 of oats, and 53,000 of various grains and feculas. The oats, although in considerable quantities, could only be partially utilized, for they required to be mixed with wheaten flour, and of this there was merely sufficient for five days' requirements. The Minister of War, coming to the rescue, offered a certain quantity of wheat out of the army supplies, and it was then determined that there would be enough bread to last until the 4th of February.* But rumours of surrender were already in the air; and though the Parisians as yet knew nothing of actual negotiations for an armistice, still every one was so persuaded of an approaching capitulation that even the cunning merchants who had hitherto hidden away their stores of provisions, in hopes of realizing even greater profits than the continual advances in prices had offered until now, suddenly produced their goods from cellars and warehouses, and the great central markets once more presented an animated sight. Cheese, butter, eggs, fowls, potatoes could all be purchased, though of course at extravagant prices. Butter was 32s. a pound, and round Dutch cheese sold at almost the same rate. A potato cost no less than 8d., and an egg fetched from 2s. to 2s. 6d. The tardy appearance of these articles of consumption

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

could therefore in nowise benefit the poorer classes, who had naturally been all along the greatest sufferers. The butter they could afford to use was compounded from the pomades in the perfumers' shops, while the lard with which they cooked their food was made from tallow. Cooking was in itself alone a difficult business, for fuel was almost unobtainable. The wood distributed by the authorities, after many hours' tedious waiting, was green and damp, and frequently would not even ignite. Rather than close their works, a rice mill and a chocolate factory, situated in out-of-the-way quarters, adopted a bold expedient, the managers causing all the asphalté of the neighbouring footways to be torn up and using it as fuel. Asphalté might, however, burn well enough in ovens and furnaces, but in grates its smell and smoke would well-nigh suffocate one. Private people had therefore to resort to other shifts and devices. Here is one instance out of many. M. Jules Pelcoq, the talented caricaturist of the *Journal Amusant*, and whose life-like sketches of Parisian scenes—forming a pictorial panorama of the siege—filled at this epoch the pages of the *Illustrated London News*, found himself quite unable to obtain fuel to warm his apartment. Accordingly, having made his rough sketches after Nature out of doors, he retired to bed, and there, with a cloak around his shoulders and blankets piled upon his nether limbs, he proceeded to draw out his compositions prior to despatching them by balloon post. Each of his drawings was photographed several times by Nadar, and the original and the various photographic copies were despatched in successive balloons, to guard against the chance of any of these falling into the enemy's hands. Thanks to this ingenious arrangement, scarcely a drawing made by

this talented draughtsman failed to reach its destination, so that the *Illustrated London News* was enabled to present its readers with a more complete panorama of siege life in Paris than was offered by any other pictorial journal.

Although the siege was rapidly drawing to a close, the balloons continued to take their flight from the Orléans, Eastern, and Northern railway stations. All the gas remaining in the city was utilized to inflate them; oil being employed for the few street lamps now lighted, and a premature effort to employ the electric spark for purposes of illumination also being made on the Place du Carrousel. Five balloons started from Paris during the first fortnight in January; and between the 15th and the 20th three more were sent off. The *Général Daumesnil*, which left on the 22nd, fell near Marchiennes, in Belgium, narrowly escaping collision with a passing railway train. On the 24th the *Trouville* was despatched, alighting safely in the Oise, and then before dawn, on the morning of the 27th, there mounted from the Gare du Nord the *Richard Wallace*, which, with its unfortunate aéronaut, was lost at sea off La Rochelle. A few hours later the *Général Cambronne* ascended from the Gare de l'Est, and reached terra firma in the department of the Sarthe. The despatches which it carried acquainted disconsolate France and attentive Europe with the momentous news that Paris had at last surrendered !*

* The number of balloons which left Paris during the siege was 64. They conveyed 9000 kilogrammes of despatches, or 3,000,000 letters of 3 grammes each; 91 passengers, besides their aéronauts; and 363 carrier pigeons. Of these latter only 57 returned into the capital; 4 in September, 18 in October, 17 in November, 12 in December, 3 in January, and 3 in February. The last one

III. PARIS CAPITULATES.

The end had come! "As long as I have a barrel of powder and a loaf of bread, I will not surrender," once cried the commander of a beleaguered citadel. Paris had powder left, but there was no more bread. When the German armies drew round the vast city which Cæsar Postiche and his admirers had converted into a toy-shop, a playground, an hotel for the whole world, when the hosts of the Fatherland belted with a circle of steel and fire the monster "Temple of Folly," the great centre of luxury and pleasure, voices were raised on all sides that Paris would not resist for fifteen days. Such a pampered population could never support the hardships of a siege. And yet the metropolis of France—which many judged by the apparently degraded condition of certain branches of its literature and art, by the indecency and venality of a contemptible press—had resisted for twenty weeks; and during those twenty weeks its patience and its fortitude had been exemplary; and, despite just grievances, the vast majority of the population had remained firmly united in presence of all seditious efforts.

Leaving aside the blame which must remain attached to the blunders of General Trochu, the defence of the city, so far as bravery and firmness were concerned, had been most honourable. The line had fought valiantly at Champigny and La Malmaison, the artillery had stolidly resisted in the bombarded forts; the Garde Mobile had displayed its courage at Bagneux, Reuil,

arrived on February 6, and had been despatched as far back as November 18. Respecting the balloons, 5 were captured by the enemy, and 2 were lost at sea.

and Bry-sur-Marne; the marching battalions of the National Guard had behaved bravely, if unskilfully, at Buzenval; the sailors had acted throughout with admirable heroism; while the non-combatant population, the "useless mouths," had rivalled each other in self-denial and stoicism in presence of cold, hunger, and bombardment. But so much courage and so many sacrifices were destined to prove useless. Paris must bow the head in presence of a victorious foe. The whole world had followed with respectful wonder the progress of the siege, and now that the fall approached the general interest and attention increased. It was such a fall! There was nothing like it in the history of sieges; for, as a writer of the epoch remarked, "the capture of Constantinople by the Mahometans fades into insignificance when compared with the beleaguering and the doom of the Queen of Cities, the most beautiful of capitals, the centre of European culture, the Mecca of luxury for all the world of civilization, the scene of all that is most brilliant and tragic in the history of France, the dwelling-place of two millions of people, the greatest fortified camp ever constructed by engineering skill, garrisoned by the largest army that ever defended a stronghold."

Whatever idea may have existed in the Government councils as to the possibility of a fresh sortie after the failure of that on January 19, vanished after the brawl of a few days later. On January 23 there was a long debate at the Hôtel de Ville, whereat it was decided that M. Jules Favre should at once start for Versailles with the view of negotiating an armistice. It was resolved to acquaint the population with the fact, setting forth the quantity of provisions remaining in the city. M. Favre was instructed to present him-

self, not as a vanquished foe, but as one still capable of resistance and resolved to defend firmly the interests of his native land. He was to speak and act with great prudence in presence of a dangerously crafty statesman. He was to say that the Government was anxious to put an end to a sanguinary struggle in which, however, the population was so desirous of persevering that any knowledge of the Government's intentions would suffice to bring about a riot. He was to add that he wished to know the intentions of the German head-quarters in reference to Paris, without treating for peace, and he was then to apply for the re-provisioning of the capital and, if needs be, a general armistice.* That same evening the Minister of Foreign Affairs started on his melancholy mission, and, passing the positions held by the Bavarian contingent, reached Versailles about midnight, proceeding at once to Count von Bismarck's residence.

At first the German Chancellor would not hear of negotiating. "You come too late," he said. "We have negotiated with your Empire; you will not, indeed you cannot, take any engagement that would be binding on France; we must adopt the most effectual means of finishing the war." The idea of Count von Bismarck's treating with the fallen dynasty roused M. Favre's ire, and he declared that the return of the Empire to power would lead to internal disorders; whereupon the German statesman cynically rejoined, "That is a matter which concerns yourself; a Government which provoked civil war in France would be rather advantageous than prejudicial to us."† Even-

* M. Dréo's "Summary."

† "A Simple Narrative," by M. Jules Favre.

tually, however, the Count consented to treat for the desired armistice, the negotiations being long and painful. The scope of this work merely permits of their result being indicated. On the morning of January 26 the *Journal Officiel* apprised the Parisians that the situation, not merely of the capital but of the entire country, being hopeless, the Government had applied for a cessation of hostilities. On the morrow a second proclamation confirmed these tidings, and at midnight the bombardment and the fire of the forts, which had hitherto continued with unabated vigour, suddenly ceased. Hostilities were at an end.

There was something oppressive in the silence of Paris after so many months of the booming of cannon and the blowing of bugles. For days the news of a capitulation had been dreaded, if not expected; and yet, prepared as one was in a measure for the sad intelligence, it proved, when at length it came, a great blow, scarcely to be realized. Some few, whose sufferings had been intense, greeted the tidings as a deliverance from bitter misery, but the aspect of Paris was generally one of mournful agitation. Knots of citizens met at the corners of the boulevards and discussed the rumoured terms on which the armistice was to be granted; some sadly accepting the conqueror's conditions as unrefusable, owing to the pressure of circumstances, while others, despite the desperate position of affairs, indulged in violent protests and vehement abuse of the Government.

The latter was not spared in the new caricatures which flaunted from the neighbouring kiosques. Here was General Trochu, portrayed as a donkey, striving to restrain the advance of a trio of lions—the National Guard—whom he held in leash. Here,

again, was the "Mendacious Triumvirate," burlesque figures of Trochu, Ducrot, and Jules Favre, with placards attached round their necks. That carried by General Trochu bore the words, "The Governor of Paris will not capitulate;" while the one adorning the person of General Ducrot had the inscription, "Dead or victorious." On M. Favre's *pancarte* figured his famous saying, "Not an inch of our territory, not a stone of our fortresses"—a phrase often ridiculed, and yet fully expressing French sentiments at the time it was uttered. A third caricature of the time already depicted General Vinoy as the "capitulator;" and in a fourth composition we were shown—somewhat in anticipation of the result of the war—a helmeted guardsman of the Fatherland going home laden with plunder, not forgetting the favourite clock; while a French linesman, with one arm in a sling, returned to Paris unarmed and empty-handed.

Meanwhile, several battalions of the National Guard protested collectively against the armistice, and General Clement Thomas had to issue a proclamation in which he deplored the necessity of having to restrain the ardour of the citizen soldiers. Then there came rumours that the admirals and the sailors refused to give up the forts; and, finally, the Communist clan, having caused the tocsin to be sounded by several churches, made an ineffectual effort to seize the guns parked round Notre Dame. At last, at ten o'clock on the morning of the 29th, the forts were evacuated, and the advanced posts abandoned. Scarcely had the movement of retreat begun than the German columns, winding forward like long black serpents, issued from their trenches and their fortified camps. The French



THE LIONS AND THE ASS.



THE MENDACIOUS TRIUMVIRATE.



"GOING HOME AGAIN."



"VINOY, THE CAPITULATOR."



were not late, but the enemy was in advance—eager to profit of his triumph. By the Barrière d'Italie there poured into the capital thousands of linesmen, Mobiles, and sailors. The former were to give up their arms on reaching their barracks; the last-named had left theirs behind them in the forts. On they came, marching silently and in good order, at times crossing some battalion of the National Guard proceeding to duty at the ramparts. As one party of Communist-minded citizen soldiers passed by, with colours flying and bayonets scintillating in the wintry sunlight, they hooted the sailors for having given up their weapons. The sons of the ocean, who had behaved so bravely throughout the siege, found no words to reply to the insults heaped upon them: but as they marched on, obedient to discipline and with a steady tread, more than one Jack Tar, distressed by this uncalled-for treatment, brushed away from his eye a tear of despair and indignation.

That same morning the following document, placarded over the walls of the vanquished capital, where all was hushed as in a house of mourning, made the Parisians fully acquainted with their destiny:—

TO THE PARISIANS.

Heartbroken with grief, we lay aside our arms. Neither sufferings nor death in the field would have induced Paris to accomplish this cruel sacrifice. It only surrenders to famine. It pauses when it has no more bread. In this cruel situation, the Government has devoted all its efforts to soften the bitterness of a sacrifice which necessity imposes. Since Monday night it has been negotiating. This evening a Treaty has been signed, guaranteeing to the entire National Guard its organization and its arms. The army, declared prisoners of war, will not leave Paris. The officers will retain their swords. A National Assembly is convoked. Though France may be unfortunate, she is not crushed. She has

done her duty, and she remains at least mistress of herself. This is the Convention signed this evening at eight o'clock, and brought back into Paris by the Minister of Foreign Affairs :—

CONVENTION.

Between M. le Comte de Bismarck, Chancellor of the Germanic Confederation, stipulating in the name of his Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, and M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the National Defence, both furnished with regular powers, have been determined the following arrangements :—

ARTICLE I.—A general armistice over all the line of military operations in course of execution between the German and the French armies shall begin for Paris on this very day, and for the Departments within the term of three days. The duration of the armistice shall be twenty-one days, dating from to-day ; so that, unless it be renewed, the armistice will terminate on the 19th of February, at noon. The belligerent armies will retain their respective positions, which will be separated by a line of demarcation. This line will commence from Pont l'Évêque, on the coast of the Department of Calvados, and continue to Lignéres, in the north-east of the Department of the Mayenne, passing between Briouze and Fromental. Touching the Department of the Mayenne at Lignéres, it will follow the limit which separates that Department from the Departments of the Orne and of the Sarthe, to the north of Morannes, and will be continued so as to leave in German occupation the Departments of the Sarthe, Indre-et-Loire, Loir-et-Cher, Loiret, and Yonne, as far as the point, east of Quarré-les-Tombes, where the Departments of the Côte d'Or, the Nièvre, and the Yonne touch each other. From this point, the tracing of the line will be reserved for an understanding which shall take place as soon as the contracting parties are made acquainted with the actual situation of the military operations now being executed in the Departments of the Côte d'Or, of the Doubs, and of the Jura. In any case the line will pass through the territory composed of these three Departments, leaving in German occupation the Departments situated to the north, and to the French army those situated to the south, of this territory. The Departments of the North and of the Pas de Calais, the fortresses of Givet and Langres, with the territory which surrounds them to a distance of ten kilomètres, and the peninsula of Havre as

far as a line drawn from Etretat in the direction of St. Romain, will remain outside the limits of the German occupation. The two belligerent armies and their advanced posts on either side will remain at a distance of at least ten kilometres from the lines drawn to separate their positions. Each of the two armies reserves for itself the right of maintaining its authority in the territory that it occupies, and of employing the means which its Commanders may judge necessary to attain that end. The armistice applies equally to the naval forces of the two countries, adopting the meridian of Dunkerque as the line of demarcation, to the west of which the French fleet will remain, and to the east of which, as soon as they can be warned, the German ships of war, which find themselves in Western waters, will withdraw. The captures made after the conclusion, and before the notification, of the armistice, will be restored, as well as the prisoners who may be taken in the interval indicated. The military operations in the Departments of the Doubs, the Jura, and the Côte d'Or, as well as the siege of Belfort, shall continue independently of the armistice, until an agreement be arrived at regarding the line of demarcation—the tracing of which through the three Departments mentioned has been reserved for an ulterior understanding.

ARTICLE II.—The armistice thus agreed upon has for its object to permit the Government of National Defence to convoke an Assembly, freely elected, which will pronounce upon the question whether the war shall be continued, or on what conditions peace shall be made. The Assembly will meet in the city of Bordeaux. Every facility will be given by the Commanders of the German armies for the election and the meeting of the Deputies who will compose that Assembly.

ARTICLE III.—The French military authorities shall immediately surrender to the German army all the forts forming the perimeter of the exterior defence of Paris, as well as their material of war. The localities and the houses situated outside that perimeter, or between the forts, may be occupied by the German troops as far as a line to be drawn by military commissioners. The ground between this line and the fortified *enceinte* of the city of Paris will be interdicted to the armed forces of both sides. The manner of surrendering the forts and the drawing of the line already mentioned will form the object of a protocol to be annexed to the present Convention.

ARTICLE IV.—During the armistice the German Army shall not enter the city of Paris.

ARTICLE V.—The *enceinte* shall be disarmed of its guns, the carriages of which are to be removed into the forts designated for that purpose by a Commissioner of the German Army.

ARTICLE VI.—The garrison (Army of the Line, Mobile Guard, and Marines) of the forts and of Paris, shall be prisoners of war, excepting a division of 12,000 men, which the military authorities in Paris will retain for service inside the city. The troops who are prisoners of war shall lay down their arms, which will be collected in appointed places, and given up according to arrangements made by a Commissioner, in the usual manner. These troops shall remain in the interior of the city, the *enceinte* of which they will not be allowed to pass during the armistice. The French authorities bind themselves to take every care that all individuals belonging to the Army and the Mobile Guard shall remain inside the city. The officers of the captured troops shall be designated in a list to be delivered to the German authorities; and at the expiration of the armistice, all the combatants belonging to the Army confined in Paris will have to constitute themselves prisoners of war to the German Army, if before that time peace is not concluded. The officers made prisoners will retain their weapons.

ARTICLE VII.—The National Guard will retain its arms. It will be charged with the protection of Paris and the maintenance of order. The same will be the case with the gendarmerie and the assimilated troops employed in the municipal services, such as the Republican Guard, the Douaniers, and the Firemen—the whole of this category not exceeding 3500 men. All corps of *Francs-tireurs* shall be dissolved by an ordinance of the French Government.

ARTICLE VIII.—Immediately after the signature of the present Act, and before taking possession of the forts, the Commander-in-Chief of the German Armies will give every facility to the Commissioners whom the French Government may send, whether into the Departments or abroad, to take steps for revictualling, and bringing in to the city the commodities intended for it.

ARTICLE IX.—After the surrender of the forts, and after the disarmament of the *enceinte* and the garrison, stipulated in Articles

V. and VI., the revictualling of Paris will be effected freely by transit, on railroad and river. The provisions intended for this revictualling shall not be drawn from the districts occupied by the German troops; and the French Government engages itself to obtain provisions beyond the line of demarcation marking the position of the German armies, except in the case of an authorization to the contrary effect given by the Commander of the latter.

ARTICLE X.—Every person wishing to leave the city of Paris must be furnished with regular permits, delivered by the French military authorities, and submitted to the *visa* of the German authorities. Free passes will be granted, in right of their position, to Candidates to the provincial constituencies, and to the Deputies of the Assembly. The free circulation of the persons who receive the authorization indicated will be allowed only between six in the morning and six in the evening.

ARTICLE XI.—The city of Paris shall pay a municipal contribution of war amounting to two hundred millions of francs. This payment must be effected before the 15th day of the armistice—the mode of payment to be determined by a mixed German and French Commission.

ARTICLE XII.—During the armistice there shall be no removal of the public objects of value which may serve as pledges for the recovery of the war contributions.

ARTICLE XIII.—The transport into Paris of arms, ammunition, or of articles entering into their manufacture, is forbidden during the term of the armistice.

ARTICLE XIV.—Immediate steps shall be taken to exchange all prisoners of war made by the French Army since the commencement of the war. With this object the French authorities will hand, as promptly as possible, nominal lists of the German prisoners of war to the German military authorities at Amiens, at Le Mans, at Orléans, and at Vesoul. The liberation of the German prisoners of war will be effected upon the points nearest to the frontier. The German authorities will deliver in exchange, on the same points and in the briefest possible time, to the French military authorities, a like number of French prisoners of war of corresponding ranks. The exchange will extend to civil prisoners, such as ship captains of the German merchant navy and the French civilians who have been interned in Germany.

ARTICLE XV.—A postal service for unsealed letters will be organized between Paris and the Departments, through the medium of the headquarters at Versailles.

In faith of which, the undersigned have appended to the present Convention their signatures and their seals.

Done at Versailles, the 28th of January, 1871.

BISMARCK.

FAVRE.

EPILOGUE.

WITH the fall of Paris came the end of the war in which the Empire had embarked with "a light heart." By the capitulation of the capital the Germans made 180,000 troops prisoners of war. They, moreover, took possession of 1500 fortress guns, 400 field pieces and mitrailleuses, besides the gunboats on the Seine and a vast supply of ammunition. General Trochu must undoubtedly be held responsible for this result of the siege. His blunders were numerous and important; and although he showed himself gifted with a certain power of organization, it was conclusively proved that he was quite incapable of commanding an army in the field. Another general might, perhaps, have been equally unable to discover the gap through which the enemy's iron circle could be broken; still far more skill might have been displayed than was the case. Of General Trochu's many coadjutors, M. Vinoy was, perhaps, the most competent; for the dilatory Ducrot, though subsequently considered a leading military man in France, proved, on the occasion of the two most important sorties, that he was a brave officer, but nothing more. He could not in justice pretend to the position of General-in-Chief; and even as a lieutenant he was not to be relied upon.* Trochu, Vinoy,

* General Ducrot, dismissed from his military commands in 1878, on account of his anti-Republican opinions, died at Versailles on the 16th of August, 1882.

and Ducrot constituted, on the French side, the military triumvirate of the siege; but all three combined were powerless to contend against the strategy of Count von Moltke. The latter successfully constituted a main double concentric line around Paris—the inner one facing the city and its huge garrison, and the outer one confronting whatever forces France tried to bring to the rescue. Originally the inner line was dependent on the outer one for protection; but, circumstances changing, the outer line was enabled to draw on the inner one at any moment of distress. So clever were Count von Moltke's combinations that he was eventually in a position to thin his line of investment to a considerable extent—and this with perfect impunity. So thus the time passed on; and, as a writer has remarked, on the one side there was "General Trochu groping in the dark in pursuit of a plan dependent on remote and hypothetical combinations; and on the other, Von Moltke holding all the threads of his complicated but well-laid scheme in his own hand, watching every movement, providing against all contingencies, measuring speed and distance with mathematical precision; reckoning on positive data for never-failing results; the means always adequate to the end; never short of his reckonings by one man; never before nor behind his time by one hour." To match an adversary of this genius the French needed a greater general than the 'Breton Bayard.'

As a body the Government of National Defence was undoubtedly animated with good intentions; but the latter do not suffice for the salvation of a people. Much of the hesitation which the Government displayed in dealing with important political questions

was due to the fear of being ousted from power by the Communist agitators. Indeed, many of its members, including General Trochu, dreaded Major Flourens, and his turbulent friends far more than they did the Germans; to this circumstance may be attributed most of their inconsistencies. These latter were at times painful to behold; and an attentive study of the minutes of the Councils held at the Hôtel de Ville shows that those who enjoyed the most liberal reputations frequently advocated the most reactionary measures. From a pecuniary point of view the Government was undoubtedly honest; but moral honesty, which consists in speaking the truth and acting in a straightforward manner, was a quality denied it. The pernicious habit of lying, fostered by the Empire, seized hold of the National Defence directly it was in power, and it, moreover, systematically withheld from the knowledge of the Parisians any unfavourable intelligence which came to hand. Over and over again did the Government compromise its popularity and aggravate the position of affairs by pursuing a deplorable policy of reticence and equivocation.

It has been constantly argued that France should have made peace after Sedan, and, from a material point of view, this would perhaps have been the proper course. But, of all nations in the world, none are so particular concerning the point d'honneur as the French. Besides, the foreign critics who condemn our Gallic neighbours for having continued the struggle after Louis Napoleon and his army were led away into captivity, can afford to do so. It is easy enough to prescribe, for a foreign land, a line of action which one would not have dared to suggest had one's own country been in question. If patriotism were always

governed by logic, it would lose half its strength. Undoubtedly, soon after Sedan the progress of the war might have been arrested; Paris, France, might have been spared much suffering, thousands of lives might have been saved, but to effect this result, foreign intervention was necessary; for such was the peculiar situation of affairs, that France, mindful of her dignity, could not spontaneously sheathe the sword.

When the Empire embarked upon the campaign, its conduct was looked upon as unjustifiably aggressive. The war was declared on a frivolous pretext, no doubt. The intrigues of the coterie surrounding the Empress Eugénie, who exclaimed, "*C'est ma guerre à moi*," the presumption and incapacity of the French diplomats and statesmen of the hour, led to a deplorable act of folly. But, while the hirelings of the Imperial Government shouted "*À Berlin!*" along the boulevard, and many genuine Parisians with them, across the Rhine there was scarcely a German who did not murmur in his heart and soul, "*Nach Paris!*" And events showed that on the part of the Teutonic Kingdoms this was no mere war of defence. The contemplated invasion of Germany was forestalled by the invasion of France, and it soon became evident that the designs of the Fatherland were quite as aggressive and as spoliatory as those of its foe.

After the Revolution of September 4 it mattered little whether France or Germany was in the right. The interests of Europe—the balance of power, so often sneered at, and yet so conducive to harmony and peace—imperatively demanded that the struggle should be stopped. The nations made a timid attempt at moral intervention, but nothing more; and the result

was the birth of a stupendous military power, which to-day oppresses the world as with a nightmare, forcing its neighbours to maintain gigantic armies, fettering commerce and industry, and poisoning the blessings of peace. The day that the Colossus of steel and iron, reared on the sands of Brandenburg, falls to the ground will be a day of triumph and relief for many millions of peaceful people. Had Lord Beaconsfield been in power in the autumn of 1870, Great Britain might perhaps have thrown down its wand, and stayed the conflict; but William Ewart Gladstone was at the head of the State, and the policy of non-intervention was all-paramount. What could have been expected from the Foreign Secretary of the day, Earl Granville, a courtier, not a statesman? Unmindful of the future, he and his colleagues did not consider intervention expedient. And yet, had fifty thousand bayonets been forthcoming at the right moment, Paris need not have capitulated, the balance of power would not have been destroyed, and Europe to-day would not have presented the aspect of a vast camp. The British Government and the British people had, however, but few sympathies for Republican France. During twenty years, almost the entire English press, including the mightiest organs of the metropolis, had commended the policy of the Empire, which "kept Paris quiet," but which, had its rule persisted, would have converted France into a gigantic house of ill-fame; and Louis Napoleon, the successful and unscrupulous adventurer who had trodden legality, honour, honesty, under foot, was hailed, on more than one occasion, with the cringing plaudits of a free people. So, when France overthrew the most corrupt Government of the century, instead of the act meeting

with general approval, it weaned from her the support of every former friend.

The events which followed the fall of Paris are still familiar in everybody's mind. A general election took place throughout the country, a National Assembly of royalist tendencies met at Bordeaux and ratified a treaty of peace, which abandoned to Germany the province of Alsace, and the arrondissements of Sarreburg, Château Salins, and the citadel of Metz in Lorraine. An indemnity of five milliards of francs was, moreover, to be paid. *Væ Victis!* France, as all the world knew, had often made war for ideas; Germany, it appeared, only did so for profit. The Government of National Defence had meanwhile resigned its powers, and M. Thiers had been appointed Chief of the Executive. On the 1st of March, 30,000 Teutonic troops, having been massed in the Bois de Boulogne and there passed in review by the Emperor William, entered Paris with colours flying and music playing, in accordance with a clause in the treaty. Their occupation of the capital was limited to the Quartier des Ternes and the Champs Elysées, though certain detachments were allowed to penetrate into the Tuileries garden and to inspect the galleries of the Louvre. No conflict, fortunately, took place, though the Government greatly dreaded one, for the National Guard had retained their arms, and there was no knowing whether their excitable patriotism would not impel them to some foolhardy effort. The convention by which Paris capitulated had granted to the National Guards this privilege of retaining their weapons, at the earnest solicitations of M. Jules Favre, for the National Defence did not feel itself equal to the task of disarming the citizens.

The German Chancellor's acquiescence in this



THE COFFINS OF GENERALS CLEMENT THOMAS AND LECOMTE.

matter was fraught with serious consequences. The Red battalions, whose commanders had already during the siege formed themselves into a Central Committee, became a powerful impediment to the re-establishment of order in the capital. They had made themselves masters of several pieces of cannon, which should have been delivered up to the Germans, and these they obstinately declined to part with. Accordingly the Government entrusted General Vinoy* with the duty of surrounding the height of Montmartre where these cannon had been installed, and of removing them from the custody of the refractory battalions. On the morning of March 18 a body of troops, under the immediate command of General Lecomte, proceeded to accomplish this task. The first movements were successfully made, but the horses necessary to convey the cannon away failing to arrive, time was allowed the Communists to beat the rappel and summon all their supporters to the scene. The troops at once gave way, hoisting the butt-ends of their muskets and fraternizing with the citizens. General Vinoy and his staff galloped off as fast as they could, but General Lecomte fell into the hands of the Reds, together with General Clement Thomas, who was on the spot in plain clothes. The latter had taken no part in the enterprise, but whilst commanding the National Guard during the siege he had become somewhat unpopular. Accordingly, in company with General Lecomte, he was dragged to the garden of a house in the Rue des Rosiers, and here both officers were cowardly murdered. Their bodies, being con-

* General Vinoy, who subsequent to the Commune was appointed Grand Chancellor of the Order of the Legion of Honour, died in Paris in 1880.

vayed on shutters into an abandoned room, remained as an example of "popular justice" to crowds of passers-by.

This event was followed by the precipitate flight of the Government to Versailles. The Central Committee of the National Guard remained in power until the election of a Communist Municipality, which ruled Paris until the close of May. A régime of folly and excesses—during which one noted the destruction of M. Thiers' house in the Place St. Georges and the overthrow of the famous Vendôme Column—culminated, on the entry of the Versailles troops, who had forced the city to stand a second siege, in the burning of many of the principal monuments of Paris and the murder of Archbishop Darboy, together with other priests and personages of note, seized as hostages by the insurgents. The reprisals were certainly terrible; but the provocation had been very great. The Commune was crushed. Some of its leaders and many of its instruments were shot down by the wayside. Others were condemned to death or sentenced to transportation by the military tribunals; though several of the most culpable managed to escape to England, Belgium, and Switzerland. To-day the ruins of the Tuileries still greet the tourist's eye, and the vast Court of Accounts remains a charred skeleton. But all the other edifices destroyed by the fury of the Terrorists have been restored. The Parisian Municipality is housed in a new and resplendent Hôtel de Ville. The Palais Royal has been rebuilt. The damage done to the Palais de Justice has been effaced. The Palace of the Legion of Honour has risen from its ashes. The building in which the Ministry of Finances was formerly

lodged has been re-erected. The Vendôme Column rears itself once more at the end of the Rue de la Paix. New houses occupy the site of those fired by the Communists in the Rue Royale. At the Croix Rousse one would seek in vain for a trace of the terrible conflagration which was there ignited. With new streets, avenues, and boulevards, illuminated at night-time by the electric light, with innumerable improvements effected in every direction, no one would recognize in the Paris of 1882 the devastated city of 1870-71.

But four years ago a marvellous World Fair, the most wonderful of its kind, attracted to the French metropolis thousands of visitors from every country of the earth; and a popular and talented journalist, describing the aspect of the city at that epoch, rightly gave to his attractive work the title of "Paris Herself Again." Those who, in the days of disaster and tribulation, prophesied that the fair city on the banks of the Seine—to-day the gay and beautiful capital of a consolidated Republic—would never regain her past splendour and prestige, forgot that beneath the bark, with full-spread sail, forming the city's escutcheon, there figures the appropriate motto—

"FLUCTUAT NEC MERGITUR."

THE END.







